"Libby- SQAPP"

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SUMMARY REPORT FOR DATA COLLECTED UNDER THE SUPPLEMENTAL REMEDIAL INVESTIGATION QUALITY ASSURANCE PROJECT PLAN (SQAPP) FOR LIBBY, MONTANA

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*Note: Unless designated with ** in the list above, appendices are provided electronically on the attached CD. Designated appendices are provided both in hard copy at the end of this report and electronically.*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

In 2000, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 8 (EPA) began emergency response cleanup of residential and commercial properties at the Libby Asbestos Superfund Site in Lincoln County, Montana. The contaminant of concern is a form of asbestos referred to as "Libby Amphibole" (LA). Concurrent with emergency response cleanup, EPA has continued to investigate and evaluate the nature and extent of LA contamination at the Site, the magnitude of LA exposures occurring in Libby, and the efficacy of the emergency response cleanup program. As part of this on-going process, EPA developed a supplemental Remedial Investigation Quality Assurance and Project Plan (referred to as the "SQAPP") to guide the collection of data needed to help strengthen final decision-making at the site. The findings of the SQAPP investigation are summarized below.

Major Findings

1. Releases from Outdoor Soil to Air

When outdoor soil that contains LA is disturbed (e.g., by raking, mowing or digging), fibers are released into the breathing zone of the person who is causing the soil disturbance. The concentration of fibers that are released into the air is highly variable, both within and between differing types of disturbance activities, but there is a clear trend for levels in air to increase as the levels in soil (as measured by a polarized light microscopy method referred to as PLM-VE) increase. That is, the lowest average levels of LA in air are observed while disturbing soil that is non-detect (Bin A) by PLM-VE, with increasing average levels for soil that is < 0.2% (Bin B1), between 0.2% and 1% (Bin B2), or > 1% (Bin C). Because of the high variability in the levels measured in air at category of soil, EPA is currently working to collect additional data of this type to help strengthen the ability to quantify exposure of people to LA during outdoor activities that disturb soil in Libby.

2. Exposures in Indoor Air

Measurement of LA levels in indoor air of typical residences in Libby reveals that concentrations are usually higher in the breathing zone of residents (measured using personal air monitors) than in general room air (measured using stationary monitors), and that levels are generally higher when an individual is engaged in active behaviors (cleaning, sweeping, moving about) than in passive behaviors (sitting, reading, etc.). As was true for exposures in outdoor air, the levels seen in indoor air are highly variable, and EPA is currently collecting additional data to help quantify the average levels of LA that occur under both active and passive indoor behavior scenarios in Libby.

3. Dust as a Predictor of Indoor Air Exposures

EPA began with the assumption that the main source of LA in indoor air was likely to be contaminated indoor dust that was resuspended into indoor air by human activity or by mechanical forces (e.g., air flow from a furnace). However, paired measurements of indoor air and indoor dust collected during the SQAPP did not reveal any clear relationship. The basis for this apparent lack of correlation is not known. EPA is presently collecting additional data on levels of LA in indoor air and indoor dust in order to determine if a relationship can be detected.

4. Levels of LA in Outdoor Ambient Air

One exposure pathway that applies to all people in Libby is inhalation of outdoor ambient air. Prior to the SQAPP, a total of 404 outdoor ambient air samples had been collected, but most of these were not analyzed with an analytical sensitivity needed to provide an accurate estimate of the true concentration. Therefore, as part of the SQAPP, a sub-set of 33 of these samples was selected for supplemental analysis to achieve an analytical sensitivity that was about 25 times lower than the original sensitivity. Comparing the original results to the re-analyses indicated that the estimated mean value decreased about 2-fold (from 0.00055 s/cc to 0.00021 s/cc), and uncertainty around each value narrowed substantially. However, these air samples were not collected in a way that ensured they were spatially or temporally representative, so EPA is currently collecting additional outdoor ambient air samples to provide a clearer assessment of the exposure that may occur via this pathway.

Other Findings

1. Transfer of Soil into Indoor Dust

EPA generally assumes that outdoor soil is an important contributor to indoor dust. That is, if outdoor soil is contaminated with LA, any soil that is tracked into the house may contaminate the indoor environment. The amount of soil transferred from outdoors to indoors varies from site to site, so during the SQAPP, EPA collected data to help quantify this transfer process at Libby. The data collected suggested that the amount of soil transferred to indoor dust depends upon the condition of the yard and the number of people and pets entering/exiting the home on a regular basis. On average, the transfer factor was about 0.002 g soil/cm^2. However, this transfer factor yields predicted levels of LA in indoor dust that are substantially higher than measured levels, indicating that the factor should not be used to predict indoor dust levels until the basis of the discrepancy is resolved.

2. LA Levels in Soil that are ND by PLM

As noted above, EPA uses a polarized light microscopy method referred to as "PLM-VE" to estimate levels of LA in soil in Libby. This is a semi-quantitative method that reports a sample as non-detect (ND) when the microscopist can not recognize any LA in the sample. However, from the studies of outdoor soil disturbance (see above), it is evident that soils that are ND can release LA fibers to air. For this reason, EPA used more powerful electron microscopic methods

to estimate the average level of LA in soils that were ND by PLM-VE. The results were variable between samples, but the average is approximately 0.05% by mass.

3. LA Levels in Dust Under Carpets

One source of potential concern to EPA is LA fibers that may be trapped under carpets. In order to obtain preliminary data, EPA sampled dust under 12 carpets in Libby. Of these, 8 did not contain detectable levels of LA (< 200 s/cm^2). Four of the samples did contain detectable levels of LA, with observed LA loadings ranging from 180 to 1,600 s/cm^2. These all occurred in carpets that were more than 10 years old. While the small amount of data collected from this pilot-scale investigation is too limited to draw firm conclusions, these results indicate that LA may occur in dust under some carpets, with an apparent tendency for levels to be higher for older carpets. The degree to which dust under carpets contributes to levels of LA in indoor air is not known, and more data would be needed to determine whether dust under carpets represents a significant residual source of LA in indoor air.

4. Time Trends in Air and Dust After Cleanup is Completed

EPA has taken action at many properties in Libby to remove indoor and outdoor sources of LA contamination. In order to determine if the cleanup remains effective over time, EPA collected indoor air and dust data for a period of up to 16 months following indoor cleanup at four properties. No upward time trends in dust were apparent, but an increase in LA concentrations in indoor air did occur in two homes at the 16 months time period. The reason for this apparent increase is not known. Additional long-term monitoring would be needed to provide information on whether potential re-contamination is occurring due to residual sources.

5. Releases to Air from EPA Cleanup Activities

EPA employs a range of strategies to minimize releases of asbestos during soil cleanup activities. In order to evaluate the effectiveness of these control strategies, EPA routinely collects samples of air from monitors placed around the perimeter of cleanup activities. In general, the detection frequency of LA in these samples is low, and there is an apparent tendency for the most recent values to be lower than the earliest values. This trend is suspected to be attributable to the fact that the level of contamination in soil and waste material was higher at the first locations that were addressed (the screening and export plants) than at the residential and commercial areas that are currently being addressed. However, analytical sensitivities for many of these perimeter air samples were too high to support reliable conclusions on the actual concentration values in the air. Therefore, as part of the SQAPP, 20 perimeter air samples were re-analyzed to obtain an analytical sensitivity that was about 5-fold lower than in the original samples. The mean concentration based on the re-analyses (0.0005 s/cc) is about 4-fold lower than was estimated previously for the same samples, and within a factor of about 2 of the average value in outdoor ambient air.

1 Introduction

In 2000, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 8 (EPA) began emergency response cleanup of residential and commercial properties at the Libby Asbestos Superfund Site in Lincoln County, Montana. Concurrent with emergency response cleanup, EPA has also continued to investigate and evaluate the nature and extent of asbestos contamination at the Site, the magnitude of asbestos exposures occurring in Libby, and the efficacy of the emergency response cleanup program. The intent of this on-going evaluation is to gauge the effectiveness of current cleanup practices, to provide the information necessary to improve cleanup efficiency, and to support the establishment of a final cleanup program for the Site. As part of this evaluation, EPA identified a number of uncertainties and data gaps that required further investigation, and developed a supplemental Remedial Investigation Quality Assurance and Project Plan (referred to as the "SQAPP") to guide the collection of additional data needed to help strengthen final decision-making at the Site (EPA 2005). Twelve areas of investigation were identified in the SQAPP, including:

Task 1: Estimation of Soil Contribution to Indoor Dust
Task 2: Estimation of Indoor Dust K-Factors
Task 3: Estimation of K-Factors for Outdoor Exposure Scenarios
Task 4: Detection Limits for Soil Methods
Task 5: Concentration in Soil that is ND by PLM-VE
Task 6-9: Time Trends in Asbestos Levels in Air and Dust in Remediated Buildings
Task 10: Dust Concentrations Under Carpets
Task 11: Safety Factor
Task 12: Re-analysis of Ambient Air and Perimeter Air Samples

The first group of tasks (Tasks 1-5) was mainly designed to help improve EPA's ability to evaluate human exposure to asbestos in the home and residential environment. The second group of tasks (Tasks 6-12) was mainly designed to help evaluate the efficacy of EPA's cleanup activities.

The purpose of this report is to summarize the data collected during each SQAPP task and provide an interpretation of the findings.

2 Data Management

2.1 Sample Documentation, Handling, and Custody

All air, dust, and soil samples collected as part of the SQAPP were identified with index identification numbers (Index IDs) assigned a prefix of "SQ" (e.g., SQ-00001). Data on the sample type, location, collection method, and collection time of all samples were recorded both in a field log book maintained by the field sampling team and on a field sample data sheet (FSDS) designed to facilitate data entry into the site database (see below). Hard copies of all FSDSs and field log books generated during the SQAPP sampling events are stored in the CDM field office in Libby, MT and at the John A. Volpe National Transportation Systems Center (Volpe Center) in Cambridge, MA. All samples collected in the field were maintained under chain of custody during sample handling, preparation, shipment, and analysis.

2.2 Database Management

Sample and analytical data are stored and maintained in a site database (referred to as the Libby2DB) housed on a SQL server at the EPA Region 8 facility in Denver, Colorado. Raw data for all SQAPP samples summarized in this report were downloaded on April 17, 2007 into a Microsoft Access® database by SRC, unless specified otherwise. A copy of this Access database is provided in Appendix 2.1 of this report (provided electronically on the attached CD). Any changes made to the Libby2DB since this download will not be reflected in the Access database.

2.3 Data Verification

In order to ensure that the Libby2DB accurately reflects the original hard copy documentation, all data downloaded from the database were examined to identify data omissions, unexpected values, or apparent inconsistencies. In addition, a subset of all FSDSs and analytical results were selected for detailed verification. In brief, verification involves comparing the data for a sample in the Libby2DB to information on the original FSDS form and on the original analytical bench sheets for that sample. Table 2-1 summarizes the fraction of the SQAPP data that has been verified stratified by task.

Appendix 2.2 provides a detailed description of any omissions or apparent errors that were noted, along with the actions taken to rectify these issues for the purposes of summarizing and interpreting data for this report. It is anticipated that these issues will be addressed and corrected in future downloads of the Libby2DB. All tables and figures generated for this report reflect corrected data.

3 Analysis Methods and Data Reduction

3.1 Transmission Electron Microscopy (TEM)

Air and dust samples collected as part of the SQAPP were analyzed by transmission electron microscopy (TEM) in basic accord with the method and counting rules specified in ISO 10312 (ISO 1995), and the SQAPP-specific counting rule modifications (specified in Appendix E of the SQAPP). This modification included changing the recording rule to include structures with an aspect ratio $\geq$ 3:1. The medium and task-specific target sensitivities for TEM were specified in Appendix B of the SQAPP.

When a sample is analyzed by TEM, the analyst evaluates multiple grid openings to support analytical sensitivity requirements and records the size, shape, and mineral type of each individual asbestos structure that is observed. Mineral type is determined by Selected Area Electron Diffraction (SAED) and Energy Dispersive Spectroscopy (EDS), and each structure is assigned to one of the following four categories:

LA Libby-class amphibole. Structures having an amphibole SAED pattern and an elemental composition similar to the range of fiber types observed in ores from the Libby mine (Meeker et al. 2003). This is a sodic tremolitic solid solution series of minerals including actinolite, tremolite, winchite, and richterite, with lower amounts of magnesio-arfedsonite and edenite/ferro-edenite.

OA Other amphibole-type asbestos fibers. Structures having an amphibole SAED pattern and an elemental composition that is not similar to fibers types from the Libby mine. Examples include crocidolite, amosite, and anthophyllite. There is presently no evidence that these fibers are associated with the Libby mine.

C Chrysotile fibers. Structures having a serpentine SAED pattern and an elemental composition characteristic of chrysotile. There is presently no evidence that these fibers are associated with the Libby mine.

NAM Non-asbestos material. These may include non-asbestos mineral fibers such as gypsum, glass, or clay, and may also include various types of organic and synthetic fibers derived from carpets, hair, etc.

For the purposes of this report, air concentrations and dust loading values are based on total countable LA structures only.

3.1.1 Calculation of Air Concentration and Dust Loading Values

The concentration of air concentration or dust loading of asbestos structures is given as:

$$\text{Air Concentration (s/cc) or Dust Loading (s/cm}^2\text{)} = N \cdot S$$

where:

N = Number of structures observed
S = Sensitivity (1/cc for air or $1/cm^2$ for dust)

The calculation of the sample sensitivity depends upon the media analyzed (air or dust). For air, the sensitivity is calculated as:

$$S = \frac{EFA}{GO \cdot A_{go} \cdot V \cdot 1000 \cdot F}$$

where:

S	=	Sensitivity in air (cc^{-1})
EFA	=	Effective area of the filter (mm^2)
GO	=	Number of grid openings examined
Ago	=	Area of a grid opening (mm^2)
V	=	Volume of air passed through the filter (L)
1000	=	Conversion factor (cc/L)
F	=	Fraction of primary filter deposited on secondary filter (indirect preparation only)

For dust, the sensitivity is calculated as:

$$S = \frac{EFA}{GO \cdot A_{go} \cdot SA \cdot F}$$

where:

S	=	Sensitivity in dust (cm^{-2})
N	=	Number of structures observed
EFA	=	Effective area of the filter (mm^2)
GO	=	Number of grid openings examined
Ago	=	Area of a grid opening (mm^2)
SA	=	Area of surface collection (cm^2)
F	=	Fraction of primary filter deposited on secondary filter

3.1.2 Combining Results from Multiple Analyses of a Single Sample

In some instances, the same air or dust sample was analyzed more than one time by TEM. In most cases, the second analysis simply evaluated additional grid openings to improve analytical sensitivity for the sample. Therefore, if an air or dust sample was analyzed more than once by TEM, each analysis result was combined together to represent a single "pooled" result value that collapses across all TEM analyses. As discussed in Appendix 3.1, the pooled result was calculated as follows:

$$\text{Pooled Result} = \sum N_i / \sum (1/S_i)$$

where:

N_i = Number of structures for analysis 'i'
S_i = Analytical sensitivity for analysis 'i' (cc^{-1} for air, cm^{-2} for dust)

3.1.3 Combining Results from Multiple Samples

When the exposure metric of concern is the average concentration across a set of multiple samples, the best estimate of the mean concentration is calculated simply by averaging the individual concentration values. As discussed in Appendix 3.1, samples with a count of zero (and hence a concentration of zero) are evaluated as zero when computing the best estimate of the mean.

3.1.4 Estimating Upper and Lower Confidence Bounds

For an Individual Sample

The uncertainty around a TEM estimate of asbestos concentration in a sample is a function of the number of structures observed during the analysis. The 95% confidence interval around the concentration is given by:

$$LB = \tfrac{1}{2} \cdot CHIINV[0.975, (2 \cdot N+1)]$$
$$UB = \tfrac{1}{2} \cdot CHIINV[0.025, (2 \cdot N+1)]$$

where:

LB = lower bound on the confidence interval
UB = Upper bound on the confidence interval
CHIINV = Inverse chi-squared cumulative distribution function
N = Number of structures observed

As illustrated in Table 3-1, as N increases, the absolute width of the confidence interval increases, but the relative uncertainty [expressed as the confidence interval (CI) divided by the observed value (N)] decreases.

Using this approach, the equation for calculation of the upper and lower bounds on the air concentration or dust loading of asbestos structures is:

$$\text{Air Concentration (s/cc) or Dust Loading (s/cm}^2\text{)} = (LB \text{ or } UB) \cdot S$$

where:

LB or UB = Number of structures based on lower bound (LB) or upper bound (UB)
S = Sensitivity (cc^{-1} for air or cm^{-2} for dust)

Across Multiple Samples

When a set of samples is collected from an exposure area in which concentration varies over space or time, the resulting data values include the between-sample variability that arises from both analytical measurement error in individual samples and from between-sample temporal or spatial variability. As discussed in Appendix 3.1, the mathematics of computing the 95% upper confidence limit (UCL) of the mean for this type of data is not well established, and no method is currently approved for use at Libby. Therefore, in this report, no uncertainty bounds are provided for mean values, but it is important to recognize that the values are uncertain. EPA will characterize the uncertainty around mean values after a statistical approach is established.

3.2 Polarized Light Microscopy (PLM)

Soil samples collected as part of the SQAPP were prepared in accord with the CDM Close Support Facility (CSF) Soil Preparation Plan (SPP) (CDM 2004). In brief, each soil sample is dried and sieved through a ¼ inch screen. Particles retained on the screen (if any) are referred to as the coarse fraction. Particles passing through the screen are referred to as the fine fraction, and this fraction is ground by passing it through a plate grinder. The resulting material is referred to as the fine ground fraction. Coarse fraction soil aliquots are examined using stereomicroscopy, and any particles of asbestos (confirmed by polarized light microscopy, or PLM) are removed and weighed in accord with SRC-LIBBY-01 (referred to as "PLM-Grav"). Fine ground fraction aliquots are analyzed using a Libby-specific PLM visual area estimation method (SRC-LIBBY-03, referred to as "PLM-VE").

PLM-VE is a semi-quantitative method that utilizes site-specific reference materials to allow assignment of samples into one of four "bins", as follows:

- *Bin A (ND):* non-detect
- *Bin B1 (Trace):* detected at levels lower than the 0.2% reference material
- *Bin B2 (<1%):* detected at levels lower than the 1% reference material but higher than the 0.2% reference material
- *Bin C:* detected at levels greater than or equal to 1%

Of the 75 soil field samples collected during the SQAPP investigation, only 5 had a coarse fraction, and all of these samples were reported as non-detect for LA when analyzed by PLM-Grav. Because of this, this report focuses on the PLM-VE results for the fine fraction.

4 Quality Control Summary

A number of Quality Control (QC) samples were collected as part of the SQAPP investigation to help characterize the accuracy and precision of the data obtained. QC samples included both field-based samples (which are submitted blind to the laboratories) and laboratory-based samples.

4.1 Field QC Samples

4.1.1 Field Blanks

A field blank is a filter cassette for either a personal or a stationary air monitor or a dust microvacuum, through which no air is drawn. Field blank samples for air are prepared for TEM analysis using a direct preparation, while field blank samples for dust are prepared using an indirect preparation. There is no field blank for soil.

For SQAPP tasks associated with activity-based sampling (ABS) (Tasks 2 and 3), field blanks for air and dust were collected at a rate of one per activity scenario. Approximately 10% of the field blanks collected during ABS were analyzed by TEM. The field blanks selected for analysis ranged over the length of the project and over expected soil concentration ranges. For SQAPP tasks not associated with ABS, field blanks for air and dust were collected at a rate of one per sampling team per day. One field blank per task per day was submitted for TEM analysis.

A total of 159 air field blanks and 40 dust field blanks were collected. Of these, 44 air field blanks and 13 dust field blanks were analyzed by TEM. The remaining field blanks were archived. Appendix 4.1 provides the detailed sample, analysis, and results information for each field blank.

No asbestos structures were observed in any of the analyzed field blank samples; therefore, additional analysis of archived field blanks was not necessary. This demonstrates that filter contamination due from either field or laboratory sources is not expected to influence asbestos results for samples collected as part of the SQAPP sampling activities.

4.1.2 Field Duplicates/Replicates

A field duplicate/replicate is an independent sample of environmental medium collected at the same place and at the same time as the primary sample. For soil, field "duplicates" are actually splits of the original field sample taken after field homogenization of soil. Field duplicates for soil were collected at a rate of about 1 field duplicate per 20 field samples in accordance with the frequencies specified in the SQAPP, resulting in three field duplicates (out of 75 field samples). For air, when feasible, side-by-side air pumping systems (co-located samples) were placed to gauge the reproducibility of results. The SQAPP did not specify a target collection rate for air field replicates, but 10 co-located pairs were collected (out of 311 field samples).

Table 4-1 summarizes the results of the original and duplicate samples for surface soil (Panel A) and stationary air (Panel B).

For soil, field duplicate results are ranked as concordant if both the original sample result and the field duplicate result report the same semi-quantitative classification. Results are ranked as weakly discordant if the original sample result and the field duplicate result differed by one semi-quantitative classification (e.g., Bin A vs. Bin B1). Results are ranked as strongly discordant if the original sample result and the field duplicate result differed by more than one semi-quantitative classification (e.g., Bin A vs. Bin B2). As seen, all three of the primary samples were Bin A (ND), and two of the three field duplicates were also Bin A (ND). One of the field duplicates was ranked as Bin B1 (<0.2%), which corresponds to a weak discordance with the parent sample. This discordance may be due to analytical variability, but might also arise from authentic heterogeneity between the soil samples. Because only three soil field duplicates were collected as part of the SQAPP, the number of samples is too limited to draw firm conclusions regarding reproducibility. However, the data suggest that results will generally be similar although differences due to small scale heterogeneity in the samples may occur.

For air, the original and replicate results were compared using a statistical test that compares the ratio of the two concentrations, each expressed as a Poisson rate (count/volume), as recommended by Nelson (1982). As seen, there was no statistically significant difference in concentration between any pair of original and replicate air samples. These results indicate that there is good reproducibility between field replicate samples for air, and that results of SQAPP investigations of air samples are suitable for use in exposure assessment and decision-making.

4.2 Laboratory QC Samples

4.2.1 TEM Laboratory Blanks

A laboratory blank for TEM is a grid that is prepared from a new, un-used filter by the laboratory and is analyzed using the same procedure as used for field samples. The purpose of the laboratory blank is to determine if there are any significant sources of contamination arising during sample preparation or analysis in the laboratory. As specified in Libby laboratory modification LB-000029, laboratory blanks are to be analyzed at a frequency of 4%.

A total of 23 TEM laboratory blanks have been analyzed as part of the SQAPP investigation (out of 399 TEM analyses). This corresponds to an analysis frequency of about 5.8%. Appendix 4.2 provides the detailed analysis and results information for each laboratory blank.

No asbestos structures were observed on any laboratory blank sample. Based on these results, it is concluded that sample preparation and analysis procedures utilized within the analytical laboratories did not introduce asbestos contamination.

4.2.2 TEM Recounts

A recount analysis is a re-examination of the original TEM grid openings to verify observed structure counts and characteristics. The following types of recount analyses were performed by each of the participating analytical laboratories during TEM analysis of SQAPP samples:

Recount Same (RS) – This is a TEM grid that is re-examined by the same microscopist who performed the initial examination.

Recount Different (RD) – This is a TEM grid that is re-examined by a different microscopist than who performed the initial examination.

Verified Analysis (VA) – This is similar to a Recount Different but has different requirements with regard to documentation. A verified analysis must be recorded in accord with the protocol provided in NIST (1994).

Interlab (IL) – This is a TEM grid that is re-examined by a microscopist from a different laboratory than who performed the initial examination.

Recount analyses were compared with the original analysis on a grid opening-by-grid opening and structure-by-structure basis. Only those grid openings that were able to be re-examined during the recount analysis were included in this evaluation. Three metrices were evaluated to assess the degree of agreement (concordance) between the original analysis and the recount analysis: 1) total number of countable asbestos structures observed, 2) mineral class designation (LA, OA and C), and 3) structure dimensions (length, width). Specific concordance criteria are detailed in Libby laboratory modification LB-000029.

A detailed concordance analysis based on mineral type and structure dimension of individual structures was performed based on presumptive matches of individual structures. For example, if a single structure is observed in a particular grid opening in both the original and the recount analysis, and the dimensions of the structure are similar in each analysis, it may be presumed that the structure being recorded is the same. Conversely, when a structure is observed in one analysis (either the original or the recount) but not the other, or if the dimensions of a structure are clearly dissimilar between the original and the recount, the structure that is observed is classified as "mis-matched".

A total of 3 RS, 5 RD, 4 VA, and 2 IL analyses have been performed as part of the SQAPP investigation. For these recount analyses, a total of 261 grid openings were re-examined. Of these, one or more asbestos structures were observed in either the original and/or the recount analysis in 32 of the grid openings. In these 32 grid openings, a total of 69 unique asbestos structures were observed. Tables 4-2 and 4-3 present the detailed grid opening-specific and structure-specific comparisons, respectively.

The grid opening-specific comparison (Table 4-2), which is based on the total number of structures counted in each grid opening, showed that differences in structure counts did not occur when grid openings were re-examined within the same laboratory. However, differences in

structure counts did occur when the re-examination was performed by a different laboratory (i.e., interlab). The average of the absolute difference in the grid opening structure count for interlab analyses compared to the original analysis was about 1.2 structures, and the average difference was about -0.1 structures. There does not appear to be a tendency for more/less structures to be recorded in either the original or recount analysis. The number of interlab analyses performed for the SQAPP is too limited to determine if there are laboratory-specific differences. The total structure counts across all matched grid openings were compared using a statistical test that compares the Poisson rate (count/total grid openings), as recommended by Nelson (1982). Differences in total structure counts across all grid openings between the original laboratory and the interlab within a sample were not statistically different for either interlab analysis.

The structure-specific comparison (Table 4-3) showed similar results, with high concordance in recorded structure attributes within the same laboratory, and lesser concordance across laboratories. When matched structures were ranked as discordant, it was always due to differences in length. The average of the absolute difference in recorded length was about 2.8 um, and the average difference was about +0.03 um. In most instances where length discordances were noted, structures are representative of fibers protruding from matrices. It is possible that differences in recorded lengths are due to differences in how fiber lengths were estimated when fiber ends were obscured/overlapped by matrix particles. It is also possible that differences could be due to methods in measuring length (i.e., direct measurement vs. measurement as screen length). No discordances in mineral class or width were noted.

These results suggest that there is generally good agreement between analysts within a laboratory, but there may be some differences in analysis methods and recording procedures between laboratories. These differences are generally small and are not expected to influence the usability and interpretation of the SQAPP results.

4.2.3 TEM Repreparations

A repreparation by TEM is a grid that is prepared from a new aliquot of the same field sample filter as was used to prepare the original grid. Repreparation analyses are compared to the original analysis based on the Poisson rate ratio method recommended by Nelson (1982).

Repreparations were prepared for 2 dust samples and 3 air samples as part of the SQAPP investigation. Table 4-4 summarizes the results of both the original analysis and the repreparation analysis. As seen, with the exception of one sample (SQ-00321), the asbestos levels reported in the repreparation analysis were not statistically different than the original analysis. The basis for the apparent difference for sample SQ-00321 (original estimate = 0.69 f/cc, repreparation estimate = 0.18 f/cc) is not known. Note, however, that a statistical test of this type is expected to have about a 5% probability of identifying a pair as different even when there is actually no difference.

4.2.4 PLM-VE Laboratory Duplicates

For PLM-VE, a laboratory duplicate is a re-preparation of a soil sample slide by a different analyst than who performed the original analysis. Laboratory duplicate results are ranked as

concordant if both the original sample result and the laboratory duplicate result report the same semi-quantitative classification. Results are ranked as weakly discordant if the original sample result and the laboratory duplicate result differed by one semi-quantitative classification (e.g.., Bin A vs. Bin B1). Results are ranked as strongly discordant if the original sample result and the laboratory duplicate result differed by more than one semi-quantitative classification (e.g., Bin A vs. Bin B2).

Table 4-5 summarizes the original and laboratory duplicate results for PLM-VE. As seen, in all instances, both the original sample result and the laboratory duplicate result were ranked as concordant. These results support the conclusion that the soil sample results for PLM-VE are reproducible and reliable and are not greatly influenced by differences in laboratory analysis techniques between analysts.

4.3 Conclusions

Based on the QC data reviewed above, it is concluded that:

- Inadvertent contamination of air or dust field samples with LA or other forms of asbestos is not of significant concern, either in the field or the laboratory.
- TEM analytical precision is generally good, as indicated by high agreement rates between field samples and matched field replicates, and between original and re-preparation samples.
- In TEM recount analyses (i.e., samples where the same grid openings are evaluated twice), there is generally high agreement for recounts performed within the same laboratory (either by the same analyst or different analysts), with somewhat lower agreement for interlab analyses. These results suggest that there may be some differences in methods or procedures between laboratories.
- PLM analytical precision is generally good, as indicated by high concordance rates between field samples and matched field duplicates and laboratory duplicates.

Taken together, these results indicate that TEM and PLM data collected at the Libby site as part of the SQAPP investigation are of acceptable quality, and are considered to be reliable and appropriate for use without qualification.

5 Task 1: Estimation of Soil Contribution to Indoor Dust

Exposure to indoor dust that is contaminated with asbestos is a potentially important exposure pathway for residents. This is because most people spend a large fraction of time indoors, and a wide variety of routine and indoor activities may cause the asbestos in dust to become suspended in air where it can be inhaled into the lung.

One potential source of asbestos contamination in indoor dust is asbestos in outdoor soil. EPA typically assumes that about 70% of indoor dust is derived by transport of outdoor soil inside the home, although this may vary from site to site. At Libby, the potential role of outdoor soil as a source of LA in indoor dust is supported by an analysis of available soil and dust data which suggests that the presence of detectable levels of LA in outdoor soil is correlated with an increased detection frequency and average level of LA in indoor dust (EPA 2007a).

Because of the potential importance of exposure to soil-derived asbestos in dust, it is important to understand the relationship between the concentration of asbestos in outdoor soil and the resultant concentration of asbestos in indoor dust. This relationship is expressed as:

$$C(dust) = C(soil) \cdot Ksd$$

where:

C(dust) = concentration (loading) of asbestos particles in indoor dust (s/cm^2)
C(soil) = concentration of asbestos structures in soil (s/gram)
Ksd = soil to dust transfer coefficient (g soil/cm^2)

In order to obtain site-specific data on the value of Ksd, Task 1 of the SQAPP called for measurements of Ksd in multiple homes in Libby to help increase confidence in risk estimates for exposure to asbestos in indoor dust derived from contaminated outdoor soil.

5.1 Study Design

5.1.1 Conceptual Approach

One approach for quantifying Ksd is to measure asbestos levels in both C(dust) and C(soil) at a location (e.g., a residence) and calculate the ratio for that location. It is important to note that Ksd is expected to vary from location to location, so the results combined across many different locations should be thought of as a distribution rather than a single value. One limitation to this approach is that it assumes that soil is the only source of asbestos in indoor dust. In cases where other sources exist (e.g., releases from indoor vermiculite insulation), the concentration of asbestos in indoor dust will be higher than expected based on soil transport alone and will yield estimates of Ksd that are too high. One way to address this problem is to create a graph that plots C(dust) vs. C(soil) at many different locations, and use the slope of the best fit regression line as the estimate of the average value of Ksd. However, it is difficult to estimate the range of

variability in Ksd between different homes because the fraction of the variability contributed by non-soil sources is not known.

An alternative approach for estimating Ksd is to select a non-asbestos chemical marker in soil that is not expected to have any significant source in indoor dust other than soil transport. In this approach, Ksd is calculated as follows:

$$Ksd = [C(dust) \cdot M] / [A \cdot C(soil)]$$

where:

Ksd = soil to dust transfer coefficient (g soil/cm^2)
C(dust) = concentration of non-asbestos chemical in indoor dust (ug/g dust)
M = Mass of dust collected (g)
A = Area vacuumed (cm^2)
C(soil) = concentration of non-asbestos chemical in soil (ug/g soil)

One potential limitation of this approach is that there is an implicit assumption that the transport of asbestos fibers in soil will be similar to the transport of the non-asbestos marker chemical in soil particles. Because of the differences in physical attributes of asbestos fibers and soil particles, this assumption is a source of uncertainty.

5.1.2 Number of Sampling Locations

As discussed in the SQAPP, screening level calculations suggested that if Ksd were measured at a set of 20 locations, it was likely that the mean and high-end value (e.g., 90^{th} or 95^{th} percentile) could be estimated with an error unlikely to be larger than about 2-fold. Based on this, paired soil and dust samples were collected from 20 homes in Libby, selected as described below.

5.1.3 Characteristics of Sampling Locations

The value of Ksd is expected to vary between locations for two main reasons: 1) the condition of the yard (bare soil *vs.* intact lawn), and 2) the number of "vectors" (i.e., the number of people, especially children, and the number of pets residing at a location) by which yard soil is brought into the house from outside. Therefore, in order to obtain a representative set of Ksd values, the sampling locations were stratified into four groups as follows:

Vegetative Cover Condition	Number of Vectors (a)	Number of Properties
Good (yard is mainly grass-covered)	≤ 3	5
	≥ 4	5
Poor (significant bare areas of soil are present)	≤ 3	5
	≥ 4	5

(a) A "vector" is any person (adult or child) or animal that enters and exits the home on a regular basis

Table 5-1 identifies the 20 locations that were selected for evaluation and indicates the number of vectors and vegetative cover conditions for each sampling location.

5.1.4 Soil Samples

In order to be representative, all soil samples were collected as a composite of 7-15 representative surface soil locations (depending on size of the area). Table 5-1 indicates the number of sub-samples composited for each soil sample. Soil was collected in basic accordance with SOP CDM-LIBBY-05.

Because it is believed that asbestos contamination is more likely to occur in certain types of outdoor soil locations (e.g., gardens) that in the yard as a whole, two separate soil composites were collected from most yards: specific use areas (SUAs) and non-specific use areas (referred to in this report as "yard" samples)[a]. These SUA and yard samples were prepared, analyzed, and maintained separately. Soil samples were dried and sieved in accord with the methods detailed in CDM (2004)[b].

5.1.5 Dust Samples

Dust samples were collected as a composite of multiple indoor locations, focusing on the main living areas. Because a dust mass of several grams is required for analysis of non-asbestos chemicals, dust collection was performed using a high-volume vacuum device, as described in SOP SRC-DUST-01. In order to obtain the quantity of dust necessary for analysis, the total area vacuumed was typically about 9 ft^2, ranging from 8-20 ft^2. Table 5-1 shows the area sampled for each dust sampling location.

5.1.6 Sample Analysis

All samples of soil and dust were analyzed for target analyte list (TAL) inorganic chemicals by SW-846 Method 6010B. As discussed in the SQAPP, it was originally planned that soil and dust samples would also be analyzed for LA asbestos by TEM in order to help judge if results for asbestos were substantially different than for other soil marker chemicals. However, it was later recognized that the high-volume dust collection method, which depends on a cyclone separator to recover dust particles from the vacuum air stream, would not be expected to yield a high recovery of asbestos particles in the dust fraction, since most asbestos particles are likely to be too small to be captured in the particulate matter. Therefore, this part of the planned sample analysis was not implemented.

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[a] SUA samples were not collected at five of the locations: 1004 Wisconsin Ave, 393 Farm to Market Rd, 3646 Highway 2 S, 500 Jay Effar Rd and 275 Dawson St. Two separate yard samples were collected at two of these locations, 500 Jay Effar Rd and 275 Dawson St; in these cases, the results for the two yard samples were averaged together.

[b] Several sieved soil samples were ground before TAL analysis, including 791 Flower Creek Rd, 250 Farm to Market Rd, 224 Forest Ave, 290 Granite Ave, and 393 Farm to Market Rd. This is not believed to have had any effect on the resulting concentration values.

5.2 Results

5.2.1 Raw Data

The raw analytical results for yard soils, SUA soils, and indoor dust samples are presented in Appendix 5.1 and are summarized in Table 5-2.

5.2.2 Selection of Chemical Markers: Detection Frequencies

The marker chemicals considered in this analysis were the list of TAL metals. As discussed in the SQAPP, high detection frequencies in both soil and dust are necessary for a meaningful quantitative determination of Ksd. As seen in Table 5-2, several of the metals had very low detection frequencies in both soil and dust, including antimony, beryllium, cadmium, selenium, silver, and thallium. Therefore, these metals were excluded as potential chemical markers. Further analyses were restricted to metals with high detection frequencies in both soil and dust, including arsenic, chromium, copper, lead, nickel, and zinc.

5.2.3 Yard vs. SUA Soil

As discussed previously, outdoor soils were separated into two categories: yard and SUA. In order to determine if the concentrations of metals in these two types of outdoor soils were similar (and should be combined) or dissimilar (and should be treated separately), paired samples (i.e., yard and SUA samples from the same property) were compared using the Wilcoxon signed rank test. Results from this test, shown in Table 5-3, indicate that there is no significant difference between the results for yard soils and SUA soils for the metals of interest. Therefore, the soil results for each yard were averaged across yard soil and SUA soil in order to improve the accuracy of the property-specific estimate.

5.2.4 Selection of Chemical Markers: Exogenous Sources

As discussed in the SQAPP, the most useful markers of soil transport to indoor dust are metals that do not have any significant indoor source. *A priori*, it is expected that there will be some household contributions of common metals (e.g., lead, copper) in some locations, but not necessarily all locations. As discussed in Appendix 5.2, Monte Carlo simulation was used to perform a screening level evaluation of the maximum dust/soil ratio that might be expected based on random variation in sample analysis, assuming that indoor dust was composed entirely of soil. Based on this analysis, sample pairs with dust/soil ratios higher than about 2.8 are very unlikely to arise unless there is an indoor dust source other than soil. Based on this, all data pairs with a dust/soil ratio greater than 2.8 were considered to be unreliable and were excluded from the calculation of Ksd. Figure 5-1 shows the dust data plotted against the combined soil data for the metals of interest, and identifies the data points identified as outliers ($C_{dust} > 2.8 \cdot C_{soil}$).

5.2.5 Ksd Results

The final data set used to calculate Ksd values, including dust and combined soil concentration data for each location, is shown in Appendix 5.3, along with the resulting location-specific value of Ksd. Table 5-4 summarizes the data by chemical, showing both the mean Ksd (g soil/cm^2) and the 95th percentile of the Ksd values across locations. As seen, results are relatively similar across different chemical markers (typically in the range of 0.0015 to 0.0045 g soil/cm^2), suggesting that each is providing valid information on the distribution of Ksd values between sites. For this reason, the average of the means and the average of the 95th percentile values across different chemicals are identified as the most robust and reliable estimates of the Ksd values for use in computing central tendency exposure (CTE) and Reasonable Maximum Exposure (RME), respectively.

5.2.6 Effect of Sampling Location Characteristics on Ksd

As discussed previously, the value of Ksd is expected to vary between locations based on the condition of the yard (bare soil *vs.* intact lawn) and the number of vectors by which yard soil is brought into the house from outside. Therefore, the sampling locations were stratified into four groups based on the vegetative cover condition (good *vs.* poor) and the number of potential "vectors" (≤ 3 *vs.* ≥ 4), where "vector" is any person (adult or child) or animal that enters and exits the home on a regular basis.

The Ksd results for each group were combined across all six indicator metals and compared pair-wise using a commercial statistical program (SigmaStat v2.0). Because the data failed a normality test ($p < 0.001$), they were analyzed using Kruskal-Wallis One Way ANOVA on Ranks. The results indicate that there is a significant difference in the distribution of Ksd estimates between groups ($p=0.004$). Specifically, the distribution of Ksd estimates from the group with good vegetative cover and ≤ 3 vectors is significantly different (lower) from the other groups ($p<0.05$). This finding is consistent with the expectation that soil transport into homes is reduced when the yard is in good condition (healthy grass cover) and there are few active pathways tending to bring soil into the home.

5.3 Reality Check

In order to investigate whether the values of Ksd derived as described above were likely to yield realistic estimates of LA loading in indoor dust, the average value (0.002 g soil/cm^2) was used to predict a range of indoor dust values based on PLM-VE soil values, and these predictions were compared to the average LA dust loading value observed in indoor spaces at each location. The basic equation for predicting the indoor loading is as follows:

$$C_{dust\ (predicted)} = (C_{soil}) \cdot SPG \cdot Ksd \qquad \text{(Equation 1)}$$

where:

Cdust = predicted LA loading in indoor dust (total LA structures/cm^2)
Csoil = Mass fraction of LA in outdoor yard soil (g LA per g of soil)

SPG = LA structures per gram of LA
Ksd = Soil to dust transfer factor (g soil per cm^2 indoor surface)

The value of SPG for LA in soil was estimated from particle size data obtained during TEM analysis of authentic site soils as part of the Performance Evaluation (PE) study. The mass of each LA structure observed in soil was estimated as follows:

Mass (g) = length (μm) · width^2 (μm^2) · 1E-12 cc/μm^3 · 3.1 g/cc .

The value for SPG was simply the total number of LA structures observed divided by the sum of the particle masses. The resulting value was 2E+11 TEM LA s/g.

Because values of Csoil that are derived from PLM-VE analysis are semi-quantitative, the following mass % ranges were assigned to each PLM-VE bin:

PLM-VE Bin	Range of Plausible Mass % Values		
	Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Best Estimate
A (ND)	0	0.05	0.01
B1 (Trace)	0.05	0.2	0.1
B2 (<1%)	0.2	1.0	0.5
C (≥ 1%)	Reported value - 0.5	Reported value + 0.5	Reported value

In cases where multiple PLM-VE samples exist for the same location, the mean concentration was estimated by taking the average of the best estimates. Similarly, the confidence bounds were estimated by taking the average of the lower bound values and upper bound values.

Because observed (measured) Cdust values are uncertain due to random statistical variability in the number of LA structures observed during analysis, each measured dust value was characterized as a range spanning the 90% Poisson CI around the reported value.

A prediction was ranked as passing the reality check if there was any overlap between the range of predicted dust values and the 90% Poisson CI around the observed dust value. Predictions that failed the reality check were ranked either as "too high" (the predicted range is higher than the upper bound of the observed value) or "too low" (the predicted range is lower than the lower bound of the observed value). The detailed results are provided in Appendix 5.4 and are summarized below.

Metric	PLM-VE BINS INCLUDED			
	All	B1, B2, C	B2, C	C
Total	717	136	20	1
Pass	437	0	0	0
Pass (%)	61%	0%	0%	0%
Too High	280	136	20	1
Too Low	0	0	0	0

As seen, a total of 717 locations were evaluated. If all of these locations are considered, 61% pass the reality check. However, this is potentially misleading, since all of the 437 values that passed were samples where the PLM-VE results for soil was Bin A (ND). As seen, if the analysis is restricted to locations where the soil was categorized as Bin B1 (trace, <0.2%), Bin B2 (<1%), and/or Bin C (≥1%), then the frequency of predicted dust values that pass the reality check is zero, and 100% of all predicted values are too high.

The basis for this discrepancy is not certain, but a number of factors might be involved:

- The calculation of indoor dust concentration assumes that the PLM-VE results for soil at a property are selected at random and the average of the measured values is a reliable estimate of the true yard-wide average (or at least the average of soil locations that contribute to indoor dust). However, many soil samples collected for analysis are from localized areas (e.g., gardens, other "special use areas") that may not be representative of the entire yard, and/or may not be the main sources of soil transport into indoor dust.

- The calculation of Ksd utilized site-specific data on the level of dust per unit area in the homes sampled. However, these dust samples were collected using a vacuum cleaner on carpets and rugs, so the amount of dust per unit area may substantially overestimate the amount of dust that is actually releasable into air and is relevant for risk assessment purposes.

- The use of Ksd based on metals to predict transport of asbestos assumes that there are no important differences in the transport pathways. However, as noted above, because of the differences in particle size and nature between asbestos fibers and soil particles, it is possible that there are differences. To the extent that Ksd based on metals overestimates transport of asbestos, it would be necessary to assume that asbestos particles are transported less efficiently into homes than soil particles. It is not known if such an assumption is reasonable or not.

In order to investigate if adjustments for one or more of these factors might bring the predicted results more nearly into agreement with the observed values, the equation for predicting dust levels was modified as follows:

$$\text{Cdust (predicted)} = C(\text{soil}) \cdot SPG \cdot Ksd \cdot AF \cdot RF \cdot Kpt \qquad \text{(Equation 2)}$$

where:

AF = Area fraction of the yard to which the PLM-VE result applies
RF = Fraction of dust in carpets that is releasable to indoor air
Kpt = Adjustment factor for preferential transport of soil compared to asbestos

No data are available on the value of any of these factors, so the following values were assumed based solely on professional judgment:

AF = 0.1
RF = 0.1
Kpt = 0.1

If these values are used, the frequency of predicted dust values passing the reality check improves, but the fraction of overestimates still exceeds the frequency of underestimates, suggesting that a significant discrepancy still remains:

Metric	BINS INCLUDED			
	All	B1, B2, C	B2, C	C
Total	717	136	20	1
Pass	685	116	6	0
Pass (%)	96%	85%	30%	0%
Too High	18	18	13	1
Too Low	14	2	1	0

This suggests that these factors account for some but probably not all of the apparent discrepancy. Another factor that might be contributing to this discrepancy is the value selected for SPG. An alternative source of SPG is from data on LA particle size data in air and dust (analyzed by TEM). The method for estimating SPG is the same as for soil. The resulting value is 3E+10 TEM LA s/g. If this lower value for SPG is combined with the assumed values for AF, RF, and Kpt, the predicted values begin to come into reasonable agreement with the observed values:

Metric	BINS INCLUDED			
	All	B1, B2, C	B2, C	C
Total	717	136	20	1
Pass	679	124	17	0
Pass (%)	95%	91%	85%	0%
Too High	2	2	1	1
Too Low	36	10	2	0

5.4 Conclusions

Measured values of Ksd at Libby range from 0.002 to 0.007 g soil/cm^2. However, screening level calculations indicate that use of a value of 0.002 g soil/cm^2 to predict indoor dust levels in accord with Equation 1 is likely to produce a large (approximately 10^4) overestimate of exposure to asbestos in indoor dust. If Equation 2 is used, predictions of indoor dust levels can be brought into approximate agreement with observations by assuming an overall correction factor of 0.0001. It is possible that a factor of this magnitude might arise from a combination of adjustments for spatial representativeness of the soil samples, the difference between total and releasable dust in carpets, differences in transport of asbestos and soil particles, and the number of structures of asbestos per gram of asbestos. However, there is at present no direct evidence to support any of the correction factors assumed.

6 Task 2: Estimation of Dust to Indoor Air Transfer

Once indoor dust becomes contaminated with asbestos, whether from outdoor soils or other means, the indoor dust may serve as a source of contamination of indoor air. If a relationship between asbestos levels in indoor dust and indoor air can be quantified, measurements of indoor dust concentrations could be used to predict concentrations in air that would result if the dust were disturbed, as follows:

$$C(air) = C(dust) \cdot Kda$$

where:

C(air) = Concentration of asbestos in air (s/cc) following disturbance of dust
C(dust) = Concentration (loading) of asbestos in dust (s/cm^2)
Kda = Release factor for dust to air (cm^{-1})

Note that the value of Kda is expected to be dependent on the nature of the activity occurring in the home, so no single value is expected to be appropriate for all situations. Rather, one value might be applicable to "routine" indoor activities, while another (presumably higher) value might be applicable to conditions when dust disturbance is high (e.g., during active cleaning activities).

Two different methods for estimating Kda at the Libby site were investigated, as described below.

Method 1

The most direct method to estimate Kda is to measure the concentration of LA in dust and air at a location, and calculate the ratio:

$$Kda = C(air) / C(dust)$$

Because this ratio can be highly variable because of variable conditions during indoor activities as well as random variability in sample analysis, the best way to estimate the average value of Ksd is to plot C(air) as a function of C(dust) and find the best fit linear regression line.

If the release of asbestos from dust to air were identical for all sizes of asbestos particle, the value of Ksd would not depend on the counting rules used to count asbestos structures in dust and air. However, in Libby, the release of asbestos particles from dust to air appears to be influenced by the particle size. As shown in Figure 6-1, the particle size distribution of LA structures found in air is enriched in larger (longer and thicker) structures than the LA structures found in dust. Because LA release from dust to air appears to depend on particle size, the value of Kda depends on which type of counting rules are used to express concentration in air and dust.

For the purposes of this effort, Kda is defined as the ratio of risk-based structures in air (PCME[c] s/cc) to the number of total TEM s/cm^2 in the source dust.

Method 2

A second method for estimating Kda is to measure the transfer of dust (rather than asbestos) from surfaces to air, and then correct that transfer factor to account for any preferential release of asbestos particles compared to dust particles. This is done as follows:

$$Kda = k\delta \cdot (k2 / k1)$$

where:

$k\delta$ = Surface to air transfer factor for dust (mg dust/cc in air per mg dust/cm^2 on surfaces)
k1 = risk-based structures (e.g., PCME) per total TEM structures in dust
k2 = risk-based structures (e.g., PCME) per total TEM structures in air

The potential advantage of this method compared to Method 1 is that the values of k1 and k2 are already known with good accuracy based on the consolidated set of LA particle size data available in Libby. The value of $k\delta$ can be estimated using real-time air particulate monitors (RAMs) to estimate dust loading in air and high volume vacuum samples to estimate dust loading on surfaces (SOP SRC-DUST-01):

$k\delta$ = Average dust concentration in air (mg/cc) / Average dust on surfaces (mg/cm^2)

6.1 Data

6.1.1 Re-Analysis of Phase 2 Samples

During Phase 2 investigations at Libby performed in 2001 (EPA 2005), EPA collected a number of paired air and dust samples during two types of disturbance scenarios:

Scenario 1 (Routine Activity)

Scenario 1 focused on the airborne exposures of residents engaged in routine household activities (excluding active cleaning). Routine activities were performed by an adult resident with a personal air monitor worn at an adult breathing level (about 5-6 feet above the ground).

Scenario 2 (Active Cleaning)

Scenario 2 focused on active cleaning-related activities (vacuuming, sweeping, dusting) that are likely to cause increased levels of dust (and hence asbestos) in indoor air.

[c] PCM Equivalent (PCME) structures are defined as structures with length > 5 um, width ≥ 0.25 um, and aspect ratio ≥ 3:1.

Cleaning activities were performed by EPA personnel with a personal air monitor worn at an adult breathing level (about 5-6 feet above the ground).

In 2001, samples collected as part of the Phase 2 investigation were analyzed with an analytical sensitivity that was not adequate to allow reliable estimation of site-specific Kda factors (EPA 2005). Therefore, SQAPP Task 2A called for the re-analysis of both the air and dust samples from Scenario 1 (routine activity) and Scenario 2 (active cleaning) to achieve improved analytical sensitivity. Results following this re-analysis are presented below (see Section 6.2).

6.1.2 SQAPP Residential Scenario Sampling

Because the number of locations sampled as part of the Phase 2 investigation was limited, additional homes were selected as part of SQAPP Task 2B to evaluate air and dust during routine activities.

Sampling Locations

In concept, measures of dust in air and dust loading on surfaces could be collected at any representative set of homes in Libby. However, in order to be most valuable, a set of homes were selected for evaluation by both Method 1 and Method 2 simultaneously. This allows estimates of Kda estimated by Method 2 to be directly compared to estimates based on Method 1. Homes with previously measured dust levels of LA at least 1,000 s/cm^2 were preferentially selected to maximize the probability that results from Method 1 would yield reliable estimates of asbestos levels in dust and air.

Sample Collection and Analysis

For Method 1, air samples were collected under routine living conditions over a period of about 8 hours. A stationary air monitor was placed in the main living area of the home and a personal air monitor was worn by an adult resident at an adult breathing level (about 5-6 ft). Air samples were analyzed by TEM using the modified ISO 10312 counting rules, as specified in the SQAPP.

Dust samples were composites collected using the microvacuum sampling method from approximately three 100-cm^2 template areas from horizontal surfaces and high traffic areas located in the main living space of the house. Dust samples were analyzed by TEM using ASTM counting rules. The target sensitivity for dust analysis was 20 cm^{-2}.

For Method 2, a stationary real-time air monitor (RAM) was used to measure the 8-hour average dust levels in air (ug/m^3) in the main living area of the home. A high volume dust vacuum was used to collect a composite dust sample from the same main living areas of the home. A high volume dust vacuum was needed to ensure that the mass of dust was large enough (1-2 grams) that it could be weighed with reasonable precision (±10 mg). The area vacuumed (cm^2) was also measured so that surficial dust loading (mg/cm^2) could be calculated.

6.2 Results for Method 1

Appendix 6.1 presents the detailed results for all air and dust samples collected or re-analyzed as part of the SQAPP indoor dust-to-air transfer investigation. Table 6-1 summarizes the LA results for dust and air samples from each property stratified by indoor activity scenario. In cases where more than one sample was collected for the media within the property (e.g., one dust sample from 1st floor, one dust sample from 2nd floor), results were averaged. Figure 6-2 presents a graphical summary of the personal and stationary air samples stratified by activity type and dust level. The upper panel of this figure presents the mean LA air concentrations for each property. The lower panel presents summary statistics across properties in a "box and whisker" format. In these figures, dust levels were stratified into three categories, as follows:

Low – LA levels in dust < 20 s/cm^2
Medium – LA levels in dust between 20-200 s/cm^2
High – LA levels in dust > 200 s/cm^2

As seen, average LA air concentrations associated with active cleaning activities tended to be higher than concentrations associated with routine activities, and average LA air concentrations from personal air monitors tended to be higher than concentrations from stationary air monitors. Within each group (e.g., routine personal, routine stationary, etc.), there is no observable trend between measured LA concentrations in air and measured LA levels in dust (i.e., increasing levels in dust do not appear to result in increasing levels in air).

The reason for this lack of observable correlation between dust and air is not certain, since it is generally expected that resuspension of indoor dust is the main source of LA in indoor air. One possible explanation for the apparent lack of correlation is that the relationship between dust levels and air levels is so highly variable and is so dependent on other factors that the relationship can not be detected until many more sample pairs are collected. Another possible explanation is that the dust samples collected from horizontal surfaces and high traffic areas may not be the main source of LA in indoor air, and that dust from other parts of the house (e.g., from upholstered furniture, air ducts, etc.) represents the main source. It is also possible that the range of dust levels evaluated in the indoor ABS scenarios was too narrow (only two properties had mean dust levels above 1,000 s/cm^2) for observable trends to be distinguished.

6.3 Results for Method 2

Table 6-2 summarizes the surficial dust loading and mean RAM dust levels measured at each location during routine activities, and these data are shown graphically in Figure 6-3. As seen, there is no apparent correlation between surficial dust loading and mean RAM dust levels measured in air. Indeed, the slope of the best fit regression line is not significantly different from zero ($p = 0.407$), and the strength of the correlation is very low ($R^2 = 0.05$). This indicates that it is not possible to reliably predict indoor dust levels in air as a function of indoor dust loading on surfaces. Thus, Method 2 does not appear to provide a reliable approach for estimating indoor exposure to asbestos in indoor air.

6.4 Conclusions

The primary purpose of SQAPP Task 2 was to investigate methods by which LA concentrations in indoor air might be estimated by measurements of LA in indoor dust (Method 1) or by measurements of total dust levels in indoor air (Method 2). In brief, neither method succeeded in providing a suitable method for predicting LA levels in indoor air. The reason for this is not certain, but could be due to limitations in the number and types of samples collected. EPA is presently performing additional studies to further investigate the relationship between indoor air and indoor dust.

7 Task 3: Estimation of Soil to Outdoor Air Transfer

Residents and workers may be exposed to asbestos in outdoor soil during a variety of different activities that disturb the soil and cause release of fibers from soil into the breathing zone of the person engaged in the soil disturbance activity. If a relationship between soil and breathing zone air can be quantified, measurements of asbestos concentration in soil can be used to predict concentrations in air if the soil is disturbed, as follows:

$$C(air) = C(soil) \cdot Ksa$$

where:

C(air) = Concentration of asbestos in air (s/cc) following disturbance of dust
C(soil) = Concentration of asbestos in soil (s/g)
Ksa = Release factor for soil to air (g soil/cc)

Note that Ksa is not expected to be a constant, but is expected to vary as a function of many variables, including the strength and nature of the disturbance activity, the condition of the soil, and the weather conditions during the disturbance. Thus, it is best to think of Ksa as a distribution of values rather than a single value.

One important limitation to this approach is that there are no well established methods for accurately measuring the concentration of asbestos in soil in units of s/g. While EPA has been investigating and testing SEM and TEM for this purpose, to date the most useful method for analyzing asbestos in soil has been the PLM-VE method. As noted above, this approach yields results in terms of mass percent, and is only semi-quantitative:

Bin A = None detected
Bin B1 = Detected at a level estimated to be < 0.2%
Bin B2 = Detected at a level estimated to be between 0.2 and 1%
Bin C = Detected at a level of 1% or greater

With this limitation in mind, the goal of Task 3 was to estimate the range of asbestos fibers in air as a function of the PLM-VE bin for soil where the outdoor activity-based sampling (ABS) scenario was occurring.

7.1 Data

7.1.1 Re-Analysis of Phase 2 Samples

During the Phase 2 project (EPA 2005), limited data were collected on the release of asbestos into outdoor air from active soil disturbance (rototilling a garden). This was referred to as Scenario 4. However, the samples of air were not analyzed with sufficient sensitivity to allow

reliable characterization of asbestos levels in air. Therefore, SQAPP Task 3A called for the re-analysis of the air samples collected during Scenario 4 to achieve lower detection limits.

The original soil sample (a composite of four sub-locations within the garden) was analyzed by PLM in accordance with NIOSH 9002. Since the Phase 2 investigation, this PLM method has been refined (i.e., the site-specific PLM-VE method). As part of SQAPP Task 3A, the soil sample from the rototilled garden was re-analyzed by PLM-VE.

7.1.2 SQAPP Residential Scenario Sampling

In order to estimate human exposure from other types of outdoor activities, three standardized soil disturbance scenarios were evaluated as part of SQAPP Task 3B at multiple locations as described below. All outdoor ABS activities occurred in summer when soils were dry to maximize the potential for dust generation.

Child Playing in Dirt with a Shovel and Bucket

The first ABS scenario was designed to evaluate a child playing in an area of bare dirt. This activity included shoveling the bare dirt into a bucket with a toy shovel and then pouring the dirt back on the ground. The play activity was performed by EPA personnel sitting on the ground with a personal air monitor positioned at a height intended to represent the breathing zone of a sitting child (about 2 feet above the ground).

Raking of Bare Soil

The second ABS scenario was designed to evaluate disturbances due to raking the soil with a metal leaf rake. The activity was performed by EPA personnel with a personal air monitor at the breathing level of an adult (about 5-6 feet above the ground).

Lawn Mowing of Grass-Covered Soil

The third ABS scenario was designed to evaluate releases of soil particles (and hence asbestos particles) from grass-covered areas due to mowing the lawn with a gas-powered rotary lawn mower. This activity was performed by EPA personnel with a personal air monitor at the breathing level of an adult (about 5-6 feet above the ground). Because children may engage in lawn mowing activities in some cases, a second personal air monitor was also worn at a height expected for the breathing zone of an 8-12 year old child (about 3.5-4.5 feet).

Sampling Locations

In order to determine if a relationship exists between LA in soil and LA in outdoor air during soil disturbance scenarios, it is important that ABS be performed at locations that span a range of soil levels. This was achieved by selecting sampling locations based on available PLM data, as well as a number of locations where soil removal and replacement had occurred, as follows:

Soil Remediated?	Soil Conc. (PLM-VE)	Outdoor ABS Scenario		
		Digging in Dirt	Raking Bare Areas	Mowing Grassy Areas
Yes	Clean fill	6	6	6
No	Bin A (Non-Detect)	3	3	3
	Bin B1 (<0.2%)	3	3	3
	Bin B2 (0.2-<1%)	3	3	3
	Bin C (≥ 1%)	3	3	3

As seen, for each type of scenario, 3 to 6 locations were selected for each of the soil conditions, for a total of 18 locations per outdoor ABS scenario.

Sample Collection and Analysis

Air

For each scenario sampling event, two stationary air samples were collected – one placed 20-40 feet upwind of the activity location in an area not impacted by other dust-generating activities, and the other placed within 10 feet of the scenario location in a downwind direction. Two personal air samples were collected per worker, one at a high flow rate (about 10 L/min) and one at a lower flow rate (about 3-5 L/min). This was done to ensure that if the first filter became overloaded with debris, a second filter was available for analysis. In general, sampling occurred for a period of about 2 hours, generating an air volume of about 1,200 L for the high flow rate sample and about 400 L for the low flow rate sample.

All air samples from outdoor ABS scenarios were analyzed by TEM using the modified ISO 10312 counting rules, as specified in the SQAPP. The target sensitivity for air sample analysis was 0.001 $(cc)^{-1}$. In cases where samples were too overloaded with debris for direct analysis, an indirect analysis was performed.

RAM

Real-time air monitors (RAMs) were used to measure the dust levels in air (ug/m^3) during the scenario activity. One RAM was placed at the upwind location and one RAM was placed in the downwind location, co-located with the stationary air monitors.

Soil

One 10-point composite sample of soil was collected from each scenario area. Soils were collected at a depth of 0-2 inches in accord with SOP CDM-LIBBY-05, with modifications to accommodate the increase in sub-samples to achieve a total mass of soil large enough (2-3 kg total) to support any potential future tests and analyses. All soil samples were analyzed semi-quantitatively by PLM-VE.

7.1.3 Worker Scenarios

Like residents, workers may be exposed to soil in outdoor air as a result of various types of soil disturbance activities. The potential magnitude of these exposures was evaluated in the SQAPP for two cases, as follows:

Golf Course Workers

Workers at the local golf course may be exposed to asbestos fibers released from soil to air under two main types of activity: lawn mowing and soil aeration. To investigate the potential magnitude of these exposures, two personal air samples were collected per worker, one at a high flow rate and one at a lower flow rate. This was done to ensure that if the first filter became overloaded with debris, the second filter would be available. For this scenario, samples of soil were not collected because a sufficient number of soil samples from the golf course had already been evaluated as part of the Contaminant Screening Study and Phase 1 investigations.

EPA Cleanup Workers

There is an extensive database of personal air samples for EPA workers engaged in various types of remedial activities in and around Libby, including various soil clean-up actions in the main residential-commercial part of town. In general, TEM analyses of worker air samples were usually not carried out with sufficient sensitivity to allow reliable quantification of LA fiber concentrations in air. The SQAPP called for the re-analysis of existing personal air samples from EPA cleanup workers by TEM to achieve a lower (better) sensitivity. However, subsequent discussions with EPA determined that, because the types of activities performed and the locations where these activities were performed (and hence the LA levels in soil) cannot be derived with certainty from the existing EPA worker dataset, achieving better analytical sensitivities for these samples has only limited value in adding to an understanding of soil to air transfer. Therefore, the re-analysis of EPA worker samples was not implemented.

7.2 Results

7.2.1 Results for Phase 2 Rototilling

Table 7-1 summarizes the personal air and soil results for the Phase 2 rototilling samples that were selected for re-analysis under SQAPP Task 3A. As seen, LA air concentrations ranged from 0.029 s/cc for the rototiller assistant to 0.17 s/cc for the rototiller. LA levels in the garden soil sample were trace (Bin B1 - less than 0.2%) by PLM-VE.

Although limited, these results indicate that high intensity soil disturbance activities such as rototilling can result in relatively high LA concentrations in air, even when soils have LA levels that are below 0.2%.

7.2.2 Results for SQAPP ABS Sampling

Appendix 7.1 presents the detailed results for all samples collected as part of the SQAPP Task 3B outdoor ABS investigation. Table 7-2 summarizes the Task 3B results for each property by outdoor ABS scenario.

RAM Dust Data

During each outdoor ABS scenario, dust levels were measured at a RAM station upwind and downwind of the scenario activity at 5-minute time intervals throughout the duration of the activity. The right-hand columns in Table 7-2 present the upwind and downwind mean RAM dust levels for each location and ABS scenario. Inspection of these data reveal that, in general, the dust levels generated by the mowing scenario tends to be highest (mean = 70 ug/m^3), and the raking scenario (mean = 5.7 ug/m^3) and the playing scenario (mean = 6.3 ug/m^3) tend to be similar and somewhat lower.

It should be noted that ABS sampling occurred under conditions of relatively low wind speed, so the distinction between upwind and downwind was not always meaningful. Figure 7-1 presents a comparison of the mean RAM dust levels at the upwind and downwind stations. If the downwind dust level is higher than the upwind dust level, the bar is positive. If the upwind dust level is higher than the downwind dust level, the bar is negative. Note that the scales in each figure are different. As seen, for the playing and raking scenarios, there does not appear to be a consistent pattern, with upwind dust levels higher than downwind at nearly half of all locations. For the mowing scenario, there tends to be more locations where the downwind dust level is higher than the upwind, but there are still several instances where this is not the case.

Comparison of Asbestos in Upwind and Downwind Stationary Monitors

Air samples at stationary stations upwind and downwind of the outdoor ABS activity were collected for TEM analysis of asbestos in air. Samples were collected to represent the entire duration of the activity. Figure 7-2 presents a comparison of the LA air concentrations upwind and downwind grouped by ABS scenario. In these figures, the error bars represent the 95% Poisson CI. Pairs that were determined to be statistically different from each other, using the ratio method for statistical comparison of two Poisson rates recommended by Nelson (1982), are circled.

As seen, in most instances (46 out of 51 pairs) the LA air concentrations measured at upwind and downwind locations were not statistically different from each other. When differences were statistically different, the downwind LA air concentration was higher than the upwind concentration in 4 of 5 pairs. This finding is similar to the results based on RAM dust levels, emphasizing that under the ABS sampling conditions, the distinction between upwind and downwind was not generally significant. This finding is not unexpected since ABS sampling generally occurred under low wind conditions.

Comparison of Asbestos in Personal and Stationary Monitors

During each ABS scenario, both personal air monitors and stationary air monitors were utilized. The personal air monitors were worn by the individual performing the activity (the monitor height depended upon the type of activity performed). Figure 7-3 presents a comparison of the LA air concentrations from personal monitors and the "downwind" stationary monitors for each property. In these figures, the error bars represent the 95% Poisson CI. Pairs that were determined to be statistically different from each other, using the ratio method for statistical comparison of two Poisson rates recommended by Nelson (1982), are circled.

While LA concentrations in personal air samples are usually not statistically different from the matched stationary downwind air samples, the personal air sample was higher than the corresponding stationary air sample in 14 of 15 pairs. These results indicate that personal air monitors provide a better estimate of potential exposures to LA from outdoor ABS activities than stationary air monitors, at least for the person performing the soil disturbance activity. This is not unexpected, since the personal air monitor is closer to the source material and is less influenced by meteorological conditions (i.e., wind), and thus has a higher probability of capturing releases from the source material as a result of disturbance activities. However, stationary air monitors in the vicinity of a soil disturbance may be useful for estimating potential exposures of "by-standers".

Comparison of Asbestos as a Function of Sample Height (Adult vs. Child)

For the mowing scenario, samples were collected at two different heights to provide information on potential differences in exposures to adult mowers and child mowers. Personal monitors were worn at a height of 3.5-4.5 feet to assess child exposures and 5-6 feet to assess adult exposures. Figure 7-4 presents a summary of the paired TEM LA air concentrations generated during mowing activities from 16 properties. In this figure, the error bars represent the 95% Poisson CI.

Concentrations between the two monitor heights were evaluated using the method for comparison of two Poisson rates described by Nelson (1982). Pairs that were found to be statistically significant are circled in Figure 7-4. At 12 of 16 locations, concentrations at the adult height were not statistically different from the child height. For the four stations where the concentrations were statistically different, TEM LA air concentrations were higher for the adult height at 3 locations and higher for the child height at 1 location. Based on these results, there do not appear to be systematic differences in air concentrations as a function of personal monitor height.

Correlation of LA in Air to Dust in Air

In general, the amount of LA released to air for a specified source level is expected to be proportional to the amount of dust (airborne soil particles) generated during the ABS scenario. Figure 7-5 presents a comparison of mean RAM dust levels from the downwind stationary monitor to measured personal LA air concentrations for each outdoor ABS scenario, stratified by soil PLM-VE bin. For each data series, a best-fit line is shown.

As seen, there does not appear to be a relationship between RAM dust levels and LA air concentrations for any scenario. The reason for this lack of correlation may be due to several factors. However, it is likely that the primary reason is that the RAM dust levels are representative of the downwind stationary monitor and the LA air concentrations are personal monitors. As noted previously, personal monitors provide a better estimate of exposure than stationary monitors. Had the RAM been representative of a personal monitor, a correlation may have become more apparent.

Correlation of LA in Air to LA in Soil

For each outdoor ABS scenario, soil disturbance activities were performed at locations representative of varying LA levels in soil. These locations were initially selected based on PLM soil results generated as part of the Contaminant Screening Study (CSS) and Phase 1 investigations. Locations were selected to be representative of clean fill from remediated areas, and Bin A, Bin B1, Bin B2, and Bin C from unremediated areas. As part of ABS activities, additional soil samples were collected which were representative of the location where the SQAPP outdoor ABS was performed.

Figure 7-6 summarizes the measured LA concentrations for personal air samples stratified by soil level for each outdoor ABS scenario. Figure 7-7 (upper panel) combines data across scenarios. Figure 7-7 (lower panel) presents summary statistics for the combined data set in a "box and whisker" format. In the box and whisker plot, because there are only two results from Bin C soils, results for Bin B2 and Bin C were combined.

As seen, there tends to be wide variability in LA concentrations in outdoor ABS air within each soil classification. The reason for this variability is likely due to numerous factors, including differences in the disturbance intensity as well as differences in soil conditions and meteorological factors. However, inspection of the mean LA air concentrations (Figure 7-7 lower panel) suggests that LA concentrations in air generally tend to increase with increasing soil LA levels. These results also indicate that soil removal activities are effective in reducing exposures from soil disturbances, since ABS scenarios performed on remediated soils yield LA air concentrations that are lower than unremediated soils (even unremediated soils that are non-detect by PLM-VE).

7.2.3 Results for Worker Scenarios

Table 7-3 summarizes the personal air and soil results golf course worker scenario that were collected under SQAPP Task 3C. Personal air samples were collected during mowing and aeration activities, as well as other types of golf course maintenance activities (e.g., raking bunkers). As seen, personal LA air concentrations ranged from non-detect to 0.0029 s/cc, with a mean of 0.0012 s/cc. Both of the stationary monitor air samples were non-detect.

Because the personal air samples collected for golf course workers represent a composite exposure from multiple locations on the golf course, it is difficult to evaluate the relationship between personal air concentrations and LA levels in soil or sand. Soil samples collected from the golf course are presented in Appendix 7.2 and are summarized below:

Location	Number of Soil Samples				
	Total	PLM-VE Result			
		Bin A	Bin B1	Bin B2	Bin C
Tees	38	17	19	2	
Fairways	27	27			
Greens	10	1	9		

As seen, LA levels in most of the soil samples from the golf course were either non-detect (Bin A) or trace (Bin B1). Average LA concentrations in worker air monitors associated with mowing and aeration activities were lower than mean values associated with ABS scenarios at most Bin A and Bin B1 properties (see Figure 7-7, above). The reason for this difference is not known, but might be related to the fact that the vegetative cover at a golf course will generally be thicker than at most residential properties.

7.3 Conclusions

Because LA levels in soil are reported semi-quantitatively, it is not possible to calculate Ksa for various ABS scenarios as originally envisioned. However, a comparison of LA levels measured in personal air monitors during disturbances at locations stratified according to the semi-quantitative level in soil suggests that exposures generally tend to increase with increasing LA levels in soil. For any specified level in soil, values in air are highly variable, reflecting the complexity of the relationship between soil and air.

8 Task 4: Detection Limits for Soil Methods

EPA has been working to develop and optimize methods for the analysis of low levels (< 1%) of asbestos in soil. To date, EPA's focus has been on developing soil analysis using the PLM-VE method, as well as TEM and possibly SEM. One important attribute of the PLM-VE method and any other method that might be developed is the method detection limit, which is defined for the Libby site as the concentration in soil that yields a result that is recognizably different than clean (reference) soil in a high fraction (e.g., 90%) of all samples.

Based on available results to date, it appears that the PLM-VE method can reliably detect the occurrence of asbestos in soil at a concentration of about 0.2%, but the detection frequency below this value is not well-defined. In order to improve the characterization of the ability of each method to detect asbestos, its is necessary to evaluate the detection limit by analyzing a series of "ultra-low" Performance Evaluation (PE) soil samples that have added LA concentrations in the range of 0.001%-0.2% by mass. Repeated analysis of these samples by PLM-VE and possibly other methods will provide an improved understanding of how detection frequency depends on the true level of LA in the sample. It was originally planned that this work would be performed under Task 4 of the SQAPP. However, responsibility for planning and performing this work has been shifted to the Libby Action Plan (EPA 2007b). Thus, no results for this task are presented in this document.

9 Task 5: Concentration in Soil that is ND by PLM-VE

At present, the primary method for evaluating soil in Libby is PLM-VE. Because many samples are reported as Bin A (non-detect, ND) by this method, it is important to characterize the concentrations of asbestos that may be present in such samples. At present, soil that is ND by PLM-VE is not remediated. Understanding what concentrations may remain after cleanup will help to estimate any future residual risk and help assess the efficacy of the soil cleanup program.

SQAPP Task 5 was designed to investigate the levels of LA in soil samples ranked as ND by PLM-VE, based on re-analysis of these soil samples using TEM and SEM analysis. This section presents the findings of this investigation.

9.1 Study Design

9.1.1 Number of Samples

Because the concentration of asbestos is expected to vary between different soil samples, it is important that a number of samples be collected to characterize the distribution of values which occur. Because the true average and standard deviation for soils that are ND by PLM-VE are not known, it is not possible to perform any *a priori* power calculations to suggest the needed sample size. In the absence of data, the initial sample size was set to 20.

9.1.2 Sample Characteristics

The only required characteristic of the soils for this task is that each has been evaluated previously by PLM-VE and that the result was ND. However, in order to ensure that the soils evaluated are representative, the samples were chosen so that the source locations provide a good spatial coverage of the Libby site. In order to achieve this goal, the community of Libby was divided into a series of zones as follows:

- Zone 1: downtown, east of California Avenue (including Stimson Lumber)
- Zone 2: downtown, west of California Avenue (including the Export Plant)
- Zone 3: the area south of Stimson Lumber
- Zone 4: the vermiculite mine and Rainy Creek Road
- Zone 5: the screening plant and adjacent area known as the flyway
- Zone 6: the area south of the flyway

Several soil samples that were ND by PLM-VE were selected at random from within each zone. In addition, targeted samples from several locations were also included, including samples from near the export plant, from Stimson Lumber, and downwind from the mine. These targeted samples were selected because it is suspected that these locations have a greater probability of having been impacted by releases than other locations not as close to known sources. A total of 20 samples were identified for re-analysis.

9.1.3 Analytical Methods

EPA Region 8 has been working to develop and test several methods for quantifying low levels of asbestos in soil, but to date no one method has proved to yield results of adequate sensitivity, accuracy and precision to meet the requirements of this task. Thus, preliminary measurements were obtained using TEM analysis in accord with SOP EPA-LIBBY-03 and SEM in accord with a method developed by USGS. The mass of each fiber observed is estimated from the dimensions of the fiber and the density, and results are expressed in terms of mass fraction (grams of asbestos per gram of soil).

9.2 Results

Table 9-1 summarizes the PLM-VE, SEM, and TEM results for each soil sample. As seen, with the exception of one sample (1-02175), the reported area fraction (%) by SEM and TEM was below 0.3% for all samples. For sample 1-02175, although the PLM-VE result is reported as non-detect, a prior analysis by NIOSH 9002 reported that LA was present with an area fraction less than 1%. SEM and TEM results for this sample range from 0.93% to 1.74%. The reason that this sample was ranked as ND (Bin A) by PLM-VE is unknown, but might be due to heterogeneity of the soil. If the results from sample 1-02175 are excluded, the mean LA area fraction by both SEM and TEM across all selected samples was about 0.04-0.05%.

Figure 9-1 presents a comparison of the SEM results to the TEM results for each soil sample. As seen, there is relatively high variability between the two methods. The reasons are not certain, but one likely factor is simple statistical variation both in the number of fibers observed and their size.

9.3 Conclusions

The SEM and TEM results from this pilot-scale study demonstrate that the mean concentration of LA is soil samples ranked as non-detect by PLM-VE is likely to be about 0.05% by mass. Because neither TEM nor SEM yield highly stable or consistent results in this low concentration range, the actual average concentration might be either higher or lower.

10Task 6-9: Time Trends in Asbestos Levels in Air and Dust in Remediated Buildings

Since 1999, EPA has been investigating levels of LA contamination in Libby and has been taking action to remove primary indoor and outdoor sources when encountered. Data on LA levels in air and dust in homes that have undergone indoor cleanup indicate that levels of total LA in air are usually less than about 0.0002-0.0003 s/cc, and levels in dust are usually below about 300-400 s/cm^2 (Volpe & CDM 2004). However, most of these data were collected within a relatively short time period of the cleanup activity. One of the most important issues facing EPA is whether cleanup actions taken in a home result in a long-term reduction in exposure, or whether there is a threat of re-contamination of indoor dust and air from residual sources such as contaminated heating ducts, carpet, vermiculite within walls, etc.

The purpose of SQAPP Tasks 6-9 was to collect data at several different locations in Libby to evaluate whether any time trend indicative of recontamination could be detected. The following scenarios were identified:

Task 6. Investigate the potential that vermiculite-containing attic insulation (VAI) that is contained within an intact structure (e.g., a wall) is serving as an on-going source of release to indoor dust or air.

Task 7. Investigate whether dust that contains residual LA (at least 500 s/cm^2) but has been left in place is serving as an important source of asbestos in indoor air.

Task 8. Investigate whether homes where residents are actively using HEPA vacuums for routine cleaning are tending to have decreased asbestos concentrations in dust over time.

Task 9. Investigate if carpets are serving as an important residual source, either due to asbestos within the carpet or beneath the carpet.

This section summarizes these sampling and analysis efforts, and presents the findings of the investigation.

10.1 Study Design

Sampling Locations

A total of four homes in Libby were selected in accordance with the selection criteria specified in the SQAPP, as modified in Libby Field Modification (LFO) #86 and #96 (see Appendix 10.1). These homes were selected to monitor indoor air and indoor dust for a period of up to 16 months following indoor cleanup. Table 10-1 shows which of these sources are applicable in each of the four properties selected for monitoring. In accord with recommendations which EPA has made

to the community, all four of these properties had been provided with a HEPA vacuum and the residents reported that they used the HEPA vacuum on a regular basis.

Sample Collection and Analysis

At each location selected for post-cleanup time trend monitoring, samples of indoor dust and indoor air (both from stationary samplers and personal air monitors worn by residents) were collected at time intervals of about 3 months, 12 months, and 16 months post-cleanup[d].

All stationary air and dust sampling locations represented living areas frequently used by the residents, and the sampling locations were the same for each of the three sequential sampling events. All residents who agreed to wear personal air monitors during the sampling event were provided instructions on what to do when leaving the house, and were provided an activity log to record what general types of activities were engaged in when in the home.

All air samples (both personal and stationary) were collected under routine living conditions. The flow rates were approximately 8-10 L/min and the collection time was between 8-10 hours. Stationary air samples were collected at the adult breathing zone height (about 5 feet). For the three homes where carpets were evaluated as a potential source, stationary samples were also placed at a height equivalent to a child sitting on the floor (about 2 feet)[e]. Air samples were analyzed by TEM using the modified ISO 10312 counting rules, as specified in the SQAPP. The target sensitivity for stationary air analysis was 0.00004 cc^{-1}.

Because the indoor samples collected immediately after the clean-up at each property (these are referred to as "clearance" samples) were only analyzed to an analytical sensitivity of 0.005 cc^{-1}, all of the clearance samples from these 4 homes were reanalyzed to achieve a target sensitivity around 0.00004 cc^{-1}.

All dust samples were composites from 3 different locations in the main living area of the house (total sample area = 300 cm^2) collected using the standard microvacuum method based on ASTM D5755-95 established for use at the site. Dust samples were analyzed by TEM using ASTM counting rules. The target sensitivity for dust analysis was 20 cm^{-2}.

10.2 Results

Tables 10-2 and 10-3 provide the detailed sample results at each time interval for each of the four properties for air and dust, respectively. For dust, because collection of "clearance" dusts is not performed, dust samples collected prior to the cleanup are used to indicate the likely levels at the time of clearance.

[d] Sample timing is different from time intervals specified in the SQAPP (3 months, 9 months, 18 months) due to a miscommunication in the field.

[e] Child height stationary monitors were evaluated as part of the 12-month and 16-month post-clearance sampling events.

Evaluation of Time Trends

Figures 10-1 and 10-2 present the measured data for each property at each time interval for air and dust, respectively. In these figures, the error bars represent the 95% Poisson CI around each individual sample. As seen, LA concentrations in air samples collected 3 months and 12 months post-clearance tended to be similar to concentrations measured in the clearance samples collected immediately following cleanup activities. However, LA concentrations appear to have increased at two properties for samples collected 16 months post-clearance. The reason for this increase is not known, but does not appear to be related to an increase in indoor dust levels (see Figure 10-2). As seen in Figure 10-2, dust levels remain low across all post-clearance time intervals at all properties.

Table 10-4 presents detailed property-specific information on the types of heating systems in use, a characterization of interior and exterior contamination (past and current), and a summary of any removal efforts that were completed. As seen, the only similarity between the two properties with increased air concentrations is that they each had an exterior soil removal performed. However, this data set is much too small to determine which of these factors, if any, is associated with the tendency for indoor air levels of LA to increase after time.

Comparison of Adult Height vs. Child Height

Figure 10-4 compares the concentration values for LA in air measured at the adult and child height. As seen, the values tended to fall along the line of identity, suggesting that there was little difference as a function of height. This was further evaluated by using the method for comparison of two Poisson rates described by Nelson (1982). At all locations, concentrations at the adult height were not statistically different from the child height. Based on these results, there do not appear to be systematic differences in air concentrations as a function of personal monitor height.

10.3 Conclusions

Data on LA concentrations in four homes studied over a period of 16 months indicate that, for 12 months, no upward time trends were apparent, but that an increase did occur at 16 months in two homes. The reason for this apparent rebound is not known. A review of property characteristics (i.e., heating methods, types of interior/exterior cleanup activities performed, asbestos sources remaining) does not provide any clear hypothesis regarding which residual source might be responsible. However, the apparent increase in indoor air levels was not accompanied by an increase in the indoor dust level.

11Task 10: Dust Concentrations Under Carpets

Under the current cleanup protocol (EPA 2003), dust under carpets is not investigated and not remediated. To date, EPA has been able to achieve indoor air clearance standards leaving carpets in place, and post-cleanup sampling suggests that carpets left in place have not significantly re-contaminated living spaces after some time has passed. Thus, asbestos within carpets does not appear to be a major source of concern. However, if a carpet that is contaminated with asbestos is removed, fibers that have accumulated under the carpet could be released to air, potentially causing short-term inhalation exposures of residents or carpet workers, and also potentially causing re-contamination of the home.

In order to investigate whether or not this exposure scenario is likely to be of concern, Task 10 of the SQAPP collected samples from dust under carpets at a number of homes in Libby and analyzed these samples for LA. This section summarizes this sampling and analysis effort, and presents the findings of the investigation.

11.1 Study Design

Sampling Locations

Details of the study design for Task 10 are provided in the SQAPP (EPA 2005). In brief, it was considered likely that the amount of LA that might occur under a carpet would depend on the age of the carpet and the number of different transport pathways by which LA might be brought into the indoor environment. Pathways that were considered in this effort included occupancy of the home by a former mine worker, presence of indoor vermiculite insulation, and presence of visible vermiculite and/or LA in outdoor soil (as identified by PLM). Therefore, the sampling plan called for the collection of samples from a number of different locations, stratified according to carpet age and the presence or absence of transport pathways, as follows:

Age of Carpet	Number of Transport Pathways Identified	
	None	One or More
5-10 years	2	2
10-20 years	2	2
> 20 years	2	2

Information on carpet age and the number of potential transport pathways was derived from interviews with the current residents. Properties with carpets that had been regularly vacuumed with a HEPA vacuum were excluded, since HEPA vacuuming would likely result in lower LA levels in dust that would occur in the absence of HEPA vacuuming. Two properties for each of the combinations of carpet age and transport pathway status selected, yielding a total of 12 dust sampling locations. None of these properties had undergone indoor dust cleanups by EPA at the time of sampling.

Sample Collection and Analysis

All dust samples from under the carpet were collected using the standard microvacuum technique based on ASTM D5755-95 established for use at the site. The area vacuumed consisted of 2-6 templates (each 100 cm^2), with the number of areas vacuumed dependent on the amount of dust present beneath the carpet (more templates for low dust loading). In all cases, dust samples were collected from high-traffic areas. Carpets were replaced after sampling was completed.

Dust samples from beneath carpets were analyzed by TEM using the modified ISO 10312 counting rules, as specified in the SQAPP. The target sensitivity for dust analysis was 200 cm^{-2}.

11.2 Results

Table 11-1 provides the detailed results for dust field samples collected under Task 10. As seen, 8 of the 12 samples did not contain detectable levels of LA at an analytical level of about 200 cm^{-2}. Four of the samples did contain detectable levels of LA, with observed LA loadings ranging from 180 to 1,600 s/cm^2. These all occurred in carpets that were older than 10 years. The highest level was detected at the only property where occupancy by a former miner was noted.

11.3 Conclusions

While the small amount of data collected from this pilot-scale investigation of dust under carpets is too limited to draw firm conclusions, these results indicate that LA may occur in dust under some carpets, with an apparent tendency for levels to be higher for older carpets. Additional sampling would be needed to assess the level of exposure that may occur during carpet removal activities.

12Task 11: Safety Factor

All homes that undergo indoor cleanup to remove a potential source such as unenclosed vermiculite or contaminated dust are subject to a clearance test of indoor air after cleanup activities have been completed before residents may re-occupy the property. The clearance test consists of using a leaf-blower to vigorously disturb any dust that remains in the house, and then collecting stationary air samples immediately following the disturbance. A property is declared to be suitable for re-occupation only if 5 of 5 samples are non-detect by the TEM-AHERA counting method, with each clearance sample analyzed to a target analytical sensitivity of 0.005 $(cc)^{-1}$. This ensures that there is a high probability that the LA concentrations in air after cleanup activities are less than 0.001 s/cc.

Because the clearance samples are collected immediately following an active disturbance with a leaf-blower, it is considered likely that the levels in air existing under conditions of routine household activities will be lower than following the leaf-blower disturbance. That is, the difference in airborne concentration of asbestos between an active leaf-blower scenario (< 0.001 s/cc) and a routine activity scenario is thought to provide a certain margin of safety in decision-making. However, the magnitude of the difference between a clearance sample collected after leaf-blower disturbance and a routine sample collected without leaf-blower disturbance has not been measured.

The purpose of SQAPP Task 11 was to collect air samples from remediated properties in order to characterize the level of LA in indoor air under routine conditions several days after completion of indoor cleanup and collection of clearance samples. This section summarizes this sampling and analysis effort, and presents the findings of the investigation.

12.1 Study Design

Details of the study design for Task 11 are provided in the SQAPP (EPA 2005). In brief, a total of nine homes in Libby were selected at random from the group of homes that were undergoing interior cleanup and air clearance sampling. Table 12-1 presents a summary of the selected properties and provides a description of the types of interior cleanup activities conducted at each property.

Stationary Air Samples

At each property, a routine stationary air sample was collected in the main living area 2-3 days after the collection of the original clearance samples. It was assumed that this time period would allow dust disturbed by the leaf-blower during clearance sampling activities to re-settle. These stationary air samples (collected 2-3 days after the original clearance) will be referred to as "post-clearance" samples.

All post-clearance air samples were analyzed for asbestos by TEM using the modified ISO 10312 counting rules, as specified in the SQAPP. The target sensitivity for air analysis was 0.00004 cc^{-1}.

Indoor Dust

Composite dust samples were also collected at each property from approximately three 100-cm^2 template areas located in the main living space of the house using the standard microvacuum method based on ASTM D5755-95 established for use at the site. Samples were collected from both horizontal surfaces and high traffic areas. Table 12-2 identifies the indoor dust samples that were collected as part of SQAPP Task 11. These dusts were not analyzed, but were archived for possible future analysis, depending upon the results of the stationary air samples.

12.2 Results

Appendix 12.1 provides the detailed results for the clearance samples collected at each property immediately following cleanup actions after disturbance with a leaf-blower. No LA structures were observed in any clearance sample and the pooled total LA air concentration was less than 0.001 s/cc for all properties. Because the post-clearance samples were all collected from living areas and not attics, for the purposes of comparing clearance samples with post-clearance, only those clearance samples collected from living areas were included in this evaluation.

Table 12-3 provides the detailed results for all post-clearance air samples collected under Task 11 of the SQAPP. As seen, with the exception of one sample (SQ-00157), all samples achieved a target analytical sensitivity of 0.00006 $(cc)^{-1}$, which is about 15 times lower than the pooled analytical sensitivity achieved for the clearance samples (0.001 cc^{-1}). Sample SQ-00157 was prepared for analysis using an indirect preparation because of debris overloading on the primary filter. The sensitivity achieved for this sample was about 0.0004 $(cc)^{-1}$. The detection frequency of LA in the post-clearance samples was 8/9, with concentrations of total LA ranging from non-detect to 0.00078 s/cc (mean = 0.00034 s/cc).

Because the clearance samples were not reanalyzed to a low analytical sensitivity, it is not possible to compute a meaningful estimate of the mean concentration and to perform a quantitative comparison of the clearance and post-clearance samples. However, the mean value for post-clearance (0.00034 s/cc) is about 3-times lower than the limit established by the clearance samples (< 0.001 s/cc).

12.3 Conclusions

The data presented support the conclusion that the concentration of LA in post-clearance indoor air samples collected within 2-3 days of interior cleanup activities average about 0.0003 s/cc, which is about 3-times lower than the limit of 0.001 s/cc established during clearance sampling.

13Task 12A: Re-Analysis of Ambient Air Samples

13.1 Summary of Early Outdoor Ambient Air Monitoring in Libby

Beginning around 2000, EPA began collecting outdoor ambient air samples at a number of locations around the community in order to gain an initial understanding of the levels of LA typically observed in outdoor air. Locations where samples were collected included:

- Fitness Center at the City Hall Building (952 East Spruce Street)
- McGrade Elementary School (899 Farm to Market Road)
- Plummer Elementary School (247 Indian Head Road)
- Rainy Creek Road
- Lincoln County Courthouse Annex (418 Mineral Avenue)
- Lincoln County Landfill
- Station FA-1 (on the northwestern boundary of the "River Runs Through It" subdivision)
- Stimson Lumber Property

In addition, samples of outdoor ambient air were collected at 27 properties in Libby where EPA clean-up activities were scheduled. These samples were collected before clean-up began, and the measurements were intended to help determine if the cleanup activities caused a measurable release to outdoor ambient air.

13.2 Ambient Air Sample Identification

For the purposes of this report, an outdoor ambient air sample is defined as any stationary outdoor air sample collected in or about the community under conditions where there were no known nearby activities or disturbances that might cause a temporary elevation of LA fibers in air. All outdoor ambient air samples were collected using stationary air monitors. This type of sampler draws a known volume of air (typically 1000-4000 L) through a mixed cellulose acetate filter, trapping asbestos particles on the filter surface.

Appendix 13.1 provides detailed information on how the ambient air samples were identified in the Libby 2DB. After implementing the selection criteria, a total of 404 ambient air samples were identified. These ambient air samples were analyzed for asbestos primarily by TEM using either ISO 10312 or AHERA counting rules. If a sample was analyzed more than once by TEM, results were pooled as specified in Appendix 3.1. Appendix 13.2 presents the detailed TEM results for these 404 ambient air samples.

For convenience, these samples are grouped according into several spatial zones, as follows:

- Zone 1: downtown, east of California Avenue
- Zone 2: downtown, west of California Avenue
- Zone 3: the area south of Stimson Lumber
- Zone 4: the vermiculite mine and Rainy Creek Road
- Zone 5: the screening plant and adjacent area known as the Flyway

Figure 13-1 shows the general locations of the ambient air samples, along with a brief description of each site and a summary of the number and dates of samples collected.

Table 13-1 presents summary statistics for the 404 outdoor ambient air samples, stratified by zone. As shown, the two highest detection frequencies (17%-34%) and the two highest mean air concentrations of LA (approximately 0.0005 to 0.002 s/cc) were observed in Zone 4 (Rainy Creek Road and the mine area) and in Zone 5 (the screening plant area). In the main commercial and residential sections of Libby (Zones 1, 2 and 3), the detection frequency was lower [(12+2+2)/261 = 6%] than in Zones 4 and 5, and the mean concentration of LA in Zones 1, 2 and 3 also tended to be lower (approximately 0.0001 to 0.0002 s/cc) than the mean concentrations in Zone 4 or 5.

Within the main commercial and residential sections of Libby (Zones 1, 2, and 3), Zone 1 exhibited a higher detection frequency (11%) compared to Zone 2 (2%) or Zone 3 (4%). Overall (all five zones combined), 60 of 404 ambient air samples (15%) were observed to contain one or more LA structures. The average concentration across all 404 ambient air samples is 0.00068 s/cc. However, confidence in this estimate of the mean concentration of LA in outdoor ambient air in Libby is limited by the high frequency of non-detects, and by the relatively high sensitivity (0.003 cc^{-1}).

In considering these results, it is important to note a number of potential limitations to the data (EPA 2006). These data lack seasonal and geographical representation over time, and there are a number of samples with inadequate sensitivities. For these reasons, these preliminary data are not considered adequate for supporting conclusions about long-term average LA levels in outdoor ambient air in Libby.

13.3 Need for Re-Analysis of Ambient Air Samples

As noted above, one of the limitations in the data set of outdoor ambient air samples was a relatively poor analytical sensitivity (about 0.003 cc^{-1}) in many samples. Therefore, in order to help evaluate this limitation, EPA determined that a supplemental analysis of a selected set of samples would be helpful in providing a clearer picture of LA levels in outdoor ambient air.

Sample Selection

A total of 33 samples were selected for re-analysis from the set of 404 outdoor ambient air samples. These 33 samples were selected using a stratified random approach in which a number of samples were selected for each zone and each year. In selecting samples for re-analysis, greatest emphasis was placed on Zones 1, 2 and 3, since these zones represent the main residential and commercial areas of Libby. Only one residential property is represented in the outdoor ambient air dataset within Zone 5 and no residential properties are represented in Zone 4. Therefore, no samples were selected for re-analysis from Zone 4 and one sample was selected from the single residential property in Zone 5.

Sample Analysis

Each sample was re-analyzed by TEM using the modified ISO 10312 counting rules, as specified in the SQAPP. The target sensitivity for air analysis was 0.0001 $(cc)^{-1}$, about 20- to 50-fold lower than the original analysis.

13.4 Results After the Re-analysis

Comparison of Original Results to Re-Analysis Results

Appendix 13.3 provides the detailed analytical results for the 33 outdoor ambient air samples selected for re-analysis. Table 13-2 presents summary statistics for the original results for these 33 samples (Panel A), and the results following re-analysis (Panel B).

As seen, the re-analysis resulted in an average sensitivity that was about 25 times lower than the original sensitivity (decreasing from 0.0025 cc^{-1} to 0.0001 cc^{-1}), and the best estimate of the mean decreased from 0.00055 s/cc to 0.00021 s/cc. A more detailed pair-wise comparison of the original and re-analysis results of the 33 selected samples is presented in Figure 13-2. The error bars in this figure represent the 95% Poisson CI around each measured concentration. As shown, the primary effect of re-analysis is to substantially decrease the uncertainty bounds around each estimate, while simultaneously improving the best estimate of the mean outdoor ambient air concentration.

Time Trends

Figures 13-3 and 13-4 show the measured concentration of LA in each sample stratified by zone and by collection date, for all 404 ambient air samples and the 33 re-analysis samples, respectively. The error bars in these figures indicate the 95% Poisson CI around each measured value. Inspection of these figures reveals that there is little or no apparent time trend in outdoor ambient air samples over the period of 2000-2002. However, this may be because the time interval over which samples were collected is too narrow to detect the beneficial effects of remedial activities in the community.

13.5 Conclusions

These results indicate that LA occurs in outdoor ambient air in Libby. Based on the original and the re-analyzed data, concentration levels do not appear to be substantially different at different locations within the main residential-commercial section of Libby (Zones 1-3), but may be somewhat higher closer to the mine (Zones 4 and 5). However, in considering these results, it is important to recognize that these samples were not collected in a way that ensures the samples are representative over space or time, so the results should be viewed as preliminary (EPA 2006). It is for this reason that EPA is currently collecting additional outdoor ambient air data to provide a much clearer characterization of levels, spatial patterns, and time trends.

14Task 12B: Re-Analysis of Perimeter Air Samples

14.1 Summary of Perimeter Air Monitoring in Libby

In performing soil cleanup activities, EPA employs a range of engineering strategies to minimize releases of asbestos into air that might otherwise result from soil disturbances. During soil cleanup activities, EPA collects samples of outdoor air from one or more stationary monitors near the cleanup activities in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the controls. These samples are typically referred to as "perimeter" air samples.

14.2 Perimeter Air Sample Identification

At the time of the SQAPP, soil cleanups had been performed at more than 350 locations in Libby. Appendix 14.1 provides detailed information on how the perimeter air samples were identified in the Libby 2DB. After implementing the selection criteria, a total of 8,510 perimeter air samples were identified. These perimeter air samples were collected using stationary air monitors and were analyzed for asbestos primarily by TEM using either ISO 10312 or AHERA counting rules. If a sample was analyzed more than once by TEM, results were pooled as specified in Appendix 3.1. Appendix 14.2 presents the detailed TEM results for these 8,510 perimeter air samples.

Table 14-1 lists locations in Libby where EPA has collected perimeter air samples in association with soil cleanup activities, and indicates the number of samples collected, provides the sampling date range, and summary statistics for perimeter air samples at each location. Table 14-2 provides a summary of perimeter air concentrations across all locations stratified by year. As seen, mean LA air concentrations and sample detection frequencies tended to be higher for 2000-2002 compared to 2003-2005. This is primarily because soil cleanups performed prior to 2003 included locations that were associated with the mine, or had the highest levels of soil contamination and were more extensive in size, while more recent soil cleanups have tended to occur mainly in residential locations. Based on the dataset across all years, 85% of all samples were non-detects. This low detection frequency suggests that engineering controls are effective in limiting releases of LA to outdoor air during EPA soil cleanup activities, but this conclusion is limited by the relatively high analytical sensitivity for most perimeter air samples (mean = 0.004 cc^{-1}, range = 0.0004 to 0.12 cc^{-1}).

14.3 Need For Re-Analysis of Perimeter Air Samples

As noted above, about 85% of the existing perimeter air samples were non-detect. While these results are consistent with the conclusion that engineering controls used for dust suppression are effective in limiting asbestos releases to air at outdoor cleanup projects in Libby, the data are limited by the relatively large fraction of all perimeter samples that are non-detects and with high (poor) analytical sensitivities. Therefore, SQAPP Task 12B called for the re-analysis of a

selected subset of the existing perimeter air samples to achieve a lower detection limit and thus, an improved understanding of the actual air concentrations of asbestos during site clean-up activities.

Sample Selection

Locations where perimeter samples had been collected were stratified according to the extent of soil removal [small (< 1,000 cubic yards) or large (≥ 1,000 cubic yards)] and the concentration of LA asbestos in the soil [low = < 1% (PLM-VE Bins A, B1 or B2) or high = ≥ 1% (PLM-VE Bin C)]. Specific locations selected for analysis included residential properties for the small sites, and locations such as the export plant and the flyway for the large sites. Other locations were selected for each category at random. Selected locations were grouped into four categories based on the soil cleanup attributes, as follows:

Group A: "Low" LA Soil Level (< 1%), "Small" Removal Size (< 1000 cy)
Group B: "High" LA Soil Level (≥ 1%), "Small" Removal Size (< 1000 cy)
Group C: "Low" LA Soil Level (< 1%), "Large" Removal Size (≥ 1000 cy)
Group D: "High" LA Soil Level (≥ 1%), "Large" Removal Size (≥ 1000 cy)

In order to seek a representative set of samples for re-analysis, 4-6 locations for each group were identified, for a total of 20 locations. Table 14-3 summarizes the 20 locations selected for re-analysis of perimeter samples. Figure 14-1 shows the location of the 20 properties selected for each group. A total of 1,221 perimeter air samples were collected at these 20 properties.

Appendix 14.3 presents the original TEM results for these 1,221 perimeter air samples. Table 14-4 summarizes the results by property and by group. As seen, 1,134 of 1,221 samples (93%) were non-detect. The detection frequency of LA in air for properties in Group D (10%) tended to be higher than for properties in Groups A, B, or C (1-2%). The mean sensitivity for these samples was 0.0037 cc^{-1}, which limits the ability to derive accurate estimates of the true concentration of LA in the samples. Therefore, a subset of 20 samples, including both detects and non-detects, were selected at random for re-analysis from this list of 1,221 perimeter air samples. Table 14-5 provides a list of the 20 perimeter air samples selected for re-analysis.

Re-Analysis methods

Each sample was re-analyzed by TEM using the modified ISO 10312 counting rules, as specified in the SQAPP. The target sensitivity for air analysis was 0.001 cc^{-1}, about 4 times lower than the original analysis.

14.4 Results

14.4.1 Comparison of Original Results to Re-Analysis Results

Appendix 14.4 provides the detailed analytical results for the 20 perimeter air samples selected for re-analysis. Table 14-6 presents summary statistics for the original results for these 20 samples (Panel A), and the results following re-analysis (Panel B). As seen, the re-analysis resulted in an average sensitivity that was about 5 times lower than the original sensitivity (decreasing from 0.0037 cc^{-1} to 0.00081 cc^{-1}). As a consequence, the detection frequency increased from 6/20 to 10/20, but the mean air concentration decreased from 0.0014 s/cc to 0.00051 s/cc.

A more detailed pair-wise comparison of the original and re-analysis results of the 20 selected samples is presented in Figure 14-2. The error bars in this figure represent the 95% Poisson CI around each measured concentration. For the original results, the confidence interval bounds are often quite wide. A comparison of the width of the confidence interval bounds between the original result and the re-analysis result demonstrates how the uncertainty due to measurement error has decreased after the re-analysis due to improved analytical sensitivity. Thus, the re-analysis provides a better estimate of the true LA concentration in air for these perimeter samples, and indicates that results based on the original analyses (with high sensitivity) may to tend to overestimate the true concentration.

14.4.2 Comparison of Perimeter Air to Ambient Air

As described in previously in Section 13, data are available on the level of LA in outdoor ambient air in Libby. A comparison of perimeter air concentrations to outdoor ambient air concentrations was performed based on the subset of ambient and perimeter samples that were re-analyzed to a lower (better) sensitivity. These datasets were used for the comparison because, if there are differences between perimeter air and outdoor ambient air, these data are more likely to detect the difference because of the improved sensitivity.

Table 14-7 presents the comparison of perimeter air concentrations to outdoor ambient air concentrations. As seen, the mean air concentration for the 20 low sensitivity perimeter air samples (0.00051 s/cc) is about 2 times higher than the mean air concentration for the low sensitivity ambient air samples from Libby (0.00021 s/cc). If this comparison is restricted to locations which are generally representative of residential cleanups (Group A and Group B), mean perimeter air concentration is about 1.5 times higher than the mean outdoor ambient air concentration.

This comparison suggests that measured LA levels in air at properties where soil cleanup activities are actively occurring are slightly higher than LA levels in outdoor ambient air at Libby in the absence of cleanup actions. However, it is important to understand that, while potential releases of LA into air may occur due to soil cleanup activities, this does not necessarily mean that these levels are in a range of potential health concern.

14.5 Conclusions

Perimeter air monitoring data show that releases of LA to air during EPA soil cleanup activities are typically low, and that the engineering controls that are used to limit emissions are generally successful. Concentrations of LA in perimeter air samples tended to be higher for samples collected prior to 2003, when soil remediation efforts occurred mainly in locations that were associated with the mine and/or had the highest levels of soil contamination, compared to samples collected more recently (2003 to 2005), when soil remediation efforts occurred mainly in residential locations. In general, measured air concentrations of LA in perimeter air monitoring samples were about 1.5 to 2 times higher than measured levels of LA in outdoor ambient air at Libby.

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